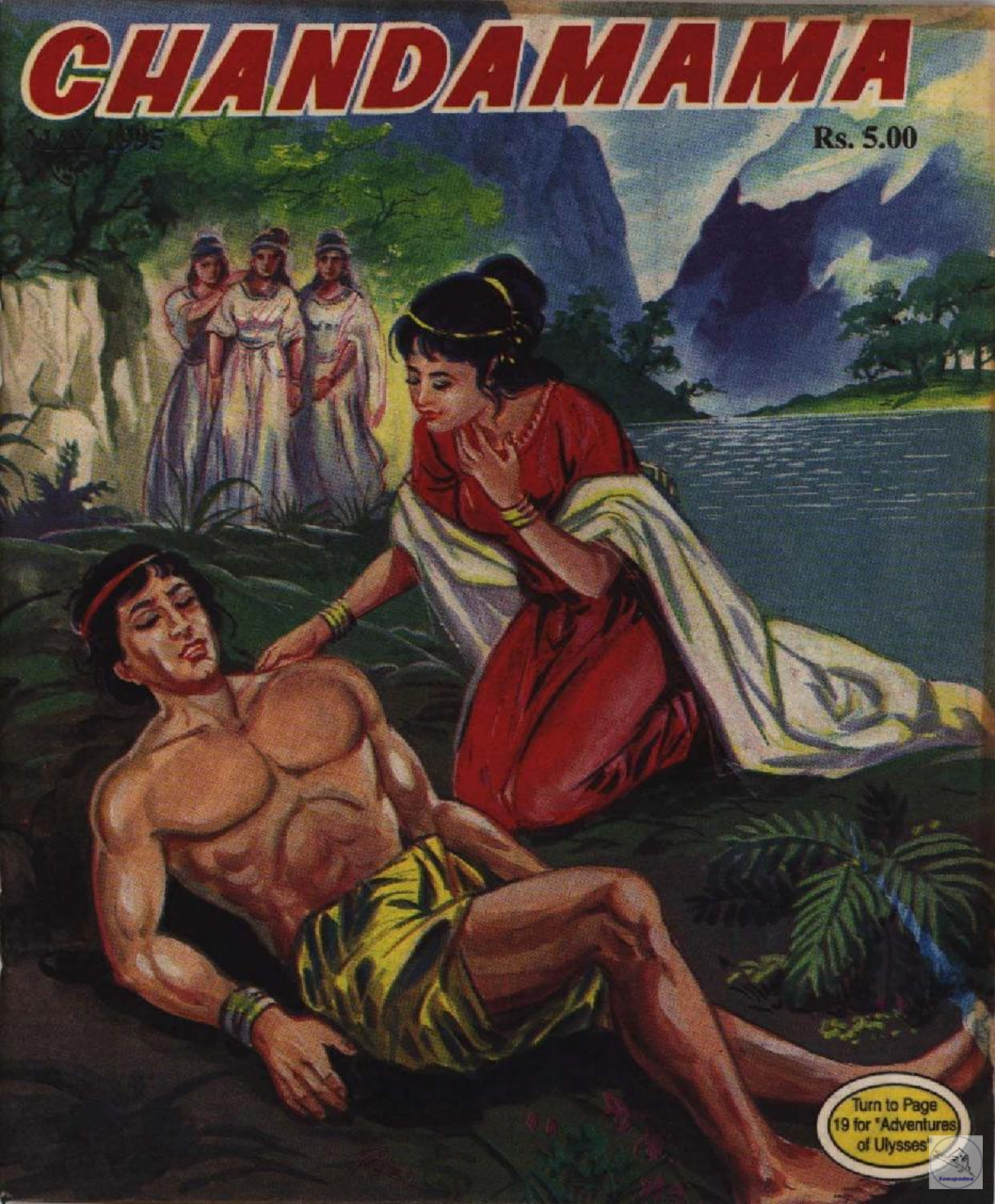


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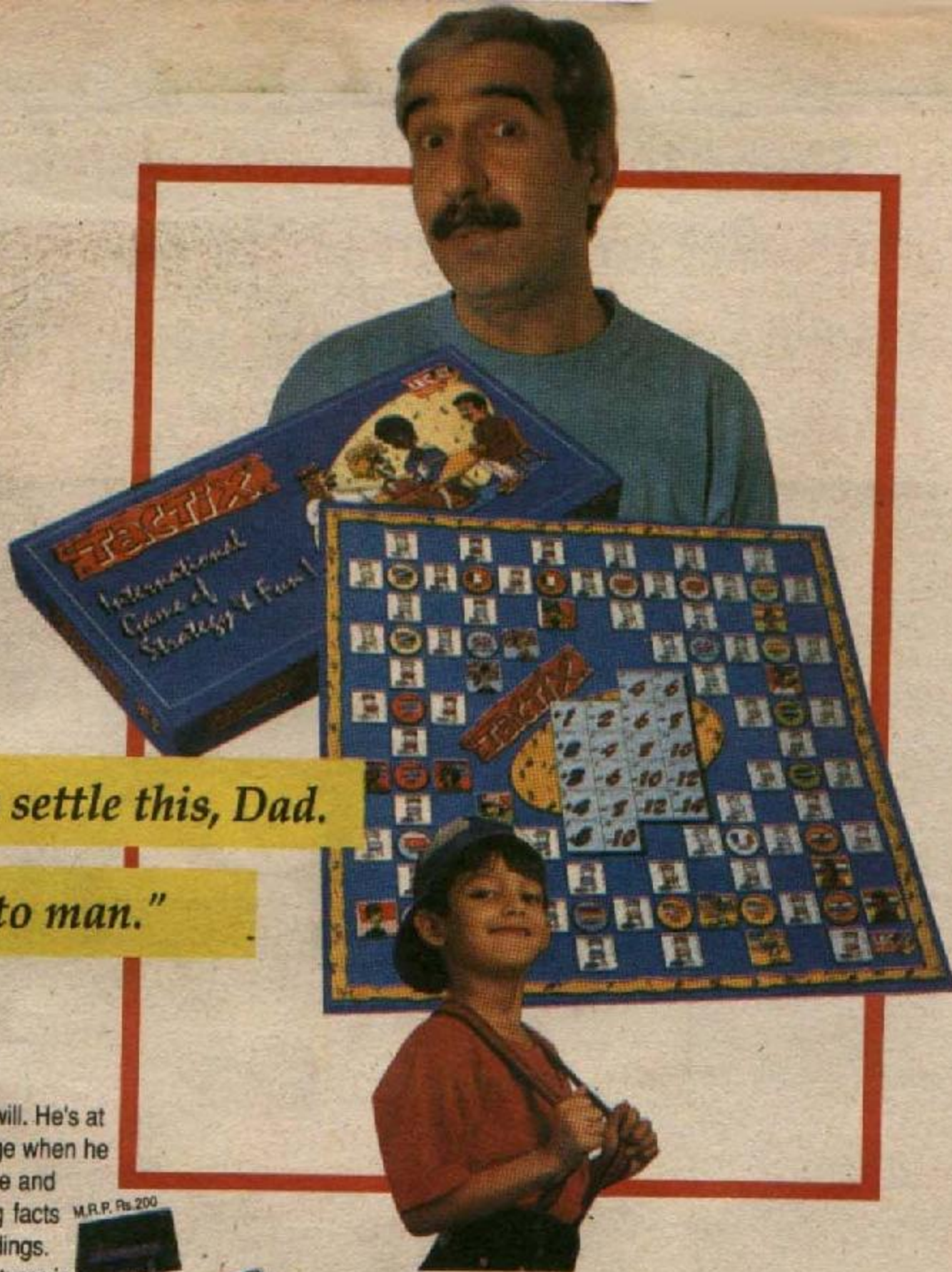
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And News Flash, Let Us Know and More!

NEXT ISSUE

Vol. 25 JUNE 1995 No. 12

KING RAGHAVENDRA: A metamorphosis comes upon the King of Kanaka. Once a cruel ruler, he is now full of compassion and eager to ensure the welfare of his subjects. The curse administered by a Brahmin boy that he would die soon had shaken him. His neighbour King Chitrasena takes pity on him and sends sage Yogananda to give him proper advice. The king is full of remorse. Will the boy pardon him? Will he come to the durbar if he were to send for him? A group of sages meet him and prompt him to put up a temple for Lord Ganesh, the remover of all obstacles. That done, he consults Chitrasena about the Brahmin boy. Meanwhile Raghavendra takes ill suddenly. The serial moves towards an exciting climax.

WHO'S A REAL FRIEND? Gopu and Balu are bosom friends. They live opposite each other. Balu's house is a grand building, while Gopu's parents can afford only a modest hut. The boys are out playing. Their friends persuade them to buy sweetmeat from the wayside vendor. Balu can buy sweetmeat for himself and his friend, too. But he desists. Gopu wants to end his friendship. Does he?

PLUS a new serial based on the **ARABIAN NIGHTS** and all other regular features, like **FORTS**, **MAHABHARATA**, and **PANCHATANTRA**.

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Founder
CHAKRAPANI



Controlling Editor :
NAGI REDDI

Health for children

A recent survey by UNICEF has given rather alarming data. It says, 44 per cent of the children in India do not get nutritious food. Nearly 19 per cent of them are on the verge of death. More than 2,200,000 children suffer from thyroid, and 6,600,000 have weak muscles affecting their movements – all this because of iron deficiency. Nearly 9,000 children are still-born every year, and 60,000 children go blind during the same period for want of Vitamin A in their food. These data have to be read with the total number of people – 250,000,000 – who go without nutritious food, and also the fact that nearly 30 per cent of the population are still below the poverty line.

It, therefore, goes without saying, these people by themselves cannot ensure that their children are given the kind of food they will need for their healthy growth. Much of the responsibility, therefore, entirely rests on the government. Almost all the States in India have implemented the mid-day meal programme which, of course, benefits only those children who attend schools. What about the dropouts and those who are too young to be sent to schools? We hear of several voluntary organisations and philanthropic institutions having launched schemes to feed these children. But they do not have unlimited funds to enlarge the scope of their kind gesture or to hold on for any length of time. But that does not mean, the children who are left out should be allowed to die.

One solution will be to see that every child of school-going age is put to school where he or she can get at least a cup of milk and some food to eat. But that will not be enough. To give them food in the morning and evening, their parents must be helped to buy at least a minimum quantity of cereals and other essential items at cheaper than the cheapest prices. Yet another method to ensure the growth of children is constantly to monitor their health. Medical attention should start even before a child or one of the parents falls ill. Prevention of sickness is better and cheaper than curing an illness.

Call it trade?

Lakshman celebrated his daughter's wedding. His friend, Bharat, was away at that time. On his return, he called on Lakshman. "I'm sorry I could not attend the wedding. I hope everything went off well. What's your son-in-law?"

"By god's grace, everything went off smooth, my friend," said Lakshman. "The boy is in jewellery business," he added showing him a picture of his son-in-law.

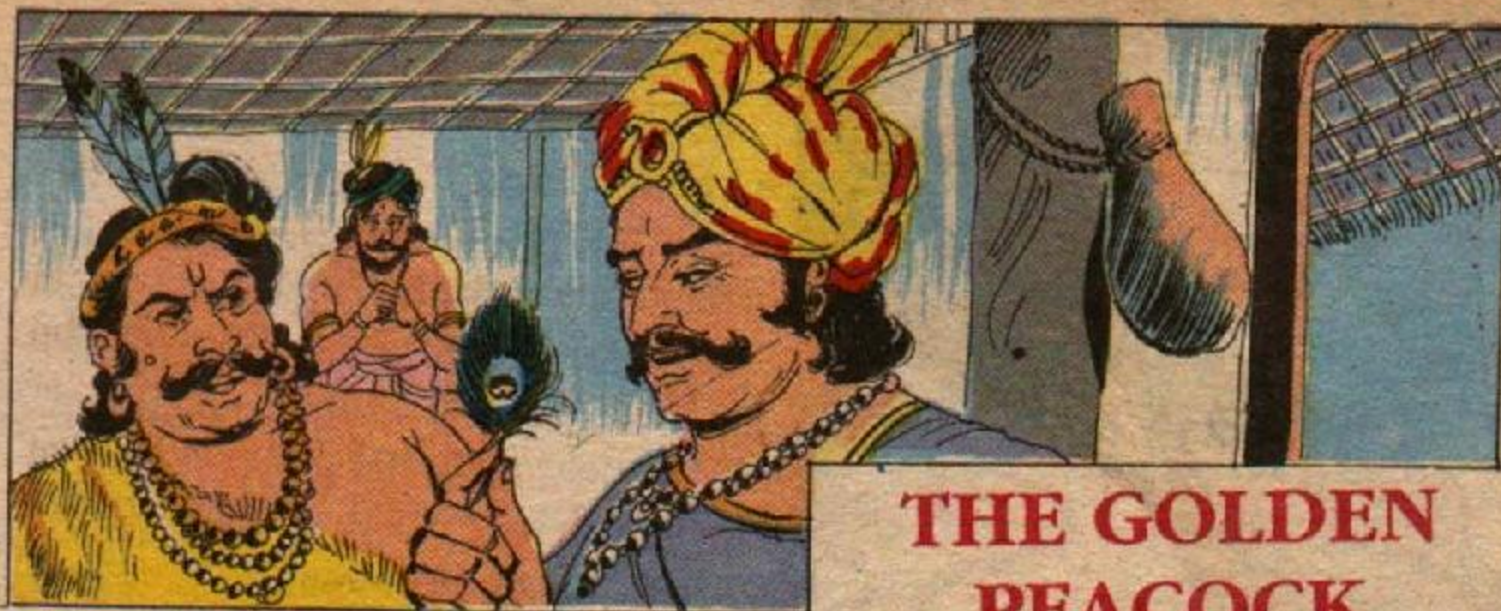
"Oh! He's a jeweller?" remarked Bharat. "I'm sure he'll do well."

Next day, Bharat called on the moneylender, Girdharilal. He was surprised to see Lakshman's son-in-law selling an ornament and taking money from Girdharilal.

After the young man went away, Girdharilal commented: "He comes here every day with one ornament or another. They were all given by Lakshman to his daughter."

"And Lakshman told me he's in jewellery business! What a trade!" muttered Bharat as he left Girdharilal.





THE GOLDEN PEACOCK

In the forests of the Vindhya mountain ranges there appeared a golden peacock, suddenly. Nobody knew from where it had come. However, word spread soon, and it reached Manikyapuri, too, where King Margasen was keen to catch it and take it to his palace. He set out for the forests with his men.

In the valley lived many tribals. Their chieftain welcomed the king and his entourage, but when he heard the purpose of their visit, he was scared. "Your Majesty, we have not seen the bird for some days now," he said with some trepidation. "In fact, we ourselves were thinking of catching the bird and bringing it to you. And my daughter, Neeli, went after it and strangely both she and the peacock have disappeared. We searched everywhere but could not see either of them. However, we picked up a golden feather." He asked one of his servants to fetch the

feather.

Margasen could not believe his eyes. The feather had a brilliance about it. "Wonderful! The peacock must have come from Devalok itself," he remarked. "That's why your daughter was unable to capture it. Anyway, now that I have come all the way here, I shall also go and search for both your daughter and the peacock."

The king and his soldiers combed the entire forest. Towards evening, one of the soldiers spotted marks on the ground. Presumably the bird had walked that way. A little further away, he saw a snake struggling to free itself from the claws of a peacock, which was trying to kill the snake with its beak.

The soldier rushed back to inform the king. His men surrounded the peacock. When it knew that it might be caught, the bird flew high and disappeared into the forest.



Margasen was on his horseback and he could go after the peacock fast. The soldiers followed him on foot but he left them far behind. The bird managed to lead him deep inside the forest. It then flew across a rivulet and entered a hut on the banks.

An old woman came outside holding the bird. "What happened? Did you get into another scrape?" She patted the bird, trying to console it and went inside.

King Margasen, too, crossed the river, dismounted, and went into the hut. There was a brilliance inside and the light came from the peacock. It was already dark outside.

"Grandma, I came here to catch the golden peacock," said the king. "Please hand it to me, and I shall give you my diamond necklace." He then took it off his neck.

"You seem to be quite determined!" the old woman exclaimed. "The peacock is my pet, and I won't part with it. If you're so keen, I shall pluck one of its golden feathers and give it to you. But don't insist on taking away the bird from me."

Margasen was now angry with the woman. "Do you know who I am? I'm the ruler of this kingdom, and the people, the animals and birds, the huts and the forests, all belong to me. So, I've a right over the peacock, too." He then moved near to catch the peacock.

The moment he touched it, he fell down as if struck by lightning. It took him some time to find his feet again. "Look here," said the woman, "this is no ordinary peacock. It's a divine bird. Nobody can take it, even touch it, without my consent. I feel pity for you. I shall give you a veena, and if you were to play 'Meghmalhar' raga on it, probably it may lay an egg. You may take it to your palace and keep it safe. The chick that comes out will be golden."

The king thought that something



is better than nothing. He took the veena and played 'Meghmalhar'. The peacock danced and soon it laid an egg. The old woman picked it up and gave it to Margasen. "It will hatch in ten days and a golden chick will come out. Till then, see that the sun's rays do not fall on the egg. And, mind you, don't tell anybody about the egg. You'll be the loser. Its power to bring out a golden chick will fade away."

The king thanked the old woman, mounted his horse, and went away. He did not say anything about the peacock or its egg to his soldiers whom he met on the way. On reaching the palace, Margasen placed the egg in a sandalwood chest and kept the box safe in a secluded room. He began counting the days. Nine days passed. On the tenth day, Margasen's daughter, Mallika, happened to go into the room where he had kept the chest. She was curious to know what was inside. She picked up the egg and ran into the garden to show it to the maids-in-waiting.

The morning rays of the sun fell on the egg in Mallika's hand and it hatched with a loud noise. Instead of a chick, a snake slithered out of the egg and bit the princess. The next moment she was turned into a golden



peacock and it flew away. The maids rushed to the king and told him of all that had happened.

The king immediately mounted his horse and went in search of the old woman. He saw in the hut three golden peacocks. "Did the egg I gave you hatch? Do you want another egg?" the woman asked the king.

"My only daughter has turned into a golden peacock and is here!" said the king, angrily. "Please make her the princess again. If you don't do so, I shall kill you!"

The old woman merely smiled. She did not appear to be scared at all. "Don't threaten me like that! If you're



clever, try to find out which one of the three peacocks is your daughter. If you identify correctly, I shall turn it into the princess. But beware, if you fail to identify the peacock, you too will turn into a peacock."

Margasen watched all the three peacocks carefully. He saw one of them shedding tears. Another one had lowered its head as if in reverence. He guessed that the one shedding tears would be Mallika, and the other one might be Neeli, the daughter of the tribal chieftain.

When he pointed them out, giving his reasons, the old woman smiled again. "Indeed, very clever of you, O king! I shall give you back your daughter." And she began chanting a *mantra*.

"Wait!" the king stopped her. "Please change the other peacock also into the tribal girl."

"Don't worry about others; you may take your daughter and go

away!" the woman told him curtly.

"I am the king, and the tribal chieftain is one of my subjects," said the king. "Of you're not willing to change that peacock, then you may make me a peacock as well."

The old woman appreciated his stand. He was not selfish and really cared for others. "O king! I commend your sense of duty and responsibility. I like you very much. I am accepting both your demands. But on one condition. You shall not try to catch the third peacock." She then chanted the mantra twice. Lo! and behold, there stood Mallika and Neeli in front of Margasen.

The king profusely thanked the old woman and escorted the two girls. On the way, he took the tribal girl back to the chieftain. He was overjoyed and asked his people to fete the king and the princess. After a day's stay, King Margasen and Princess Mallika left for the palace.



FATED TO BECOME EMPEROR

Kanchana was the daughter of Karnavarma of Kanakadurga. She was an expert in astrology. She examined her own horoscope and declared that whoever married her would become an emperor.

The king wished to conduct her wedding on a grand scale and sought the portraits of prospective suitors from among the princes of the land. Kanchana insisted on seeing their horoscopes, too. She examined every one of them and told her father, "None of them is fated to become an emperor."

Karnavarma brushed aside her reading of the horoscopes. "We would better consult your *guru* on that point. For the present, look at these portraits and tell me who you would like to marry."

She chose Prince Amarasena from the neighbouring kingdom. The king immediately went about arranging for the wedding ceremony. The royal astrologer had looked into the prince's horoscope before the wedding took place, but he was not present for the ceremony as he was away on a pilgrimage.

When Kanchana heard that he had come back, she expressed a doubt to her father. "Would he have examined the horoscope thoroughly?"

King Karnavarma assured her, "After all, *your* horoscope says whoever weds you is fated to become an emperor. So, why bother now? That is what your guru, the royal astrologer, told me."



THE KING'S SOLDIERS HEAR A COMMOTION.

WHAT'S THAT? LET'S GO AND FIND OUT.
HELP! HELP! HELP!



THE SOLDIERS BREAK INTO DURBUDDHI'S HOUSE.

HE BROUGHT US HERE SAYING HE WOULD HONOUR US. INSTEAD, HE BROKE OUR HEADS.



IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT, SIR. LET ME EXPLAIN!



SHUT UP! YOU CAN EXPLAIN ALL THAT TO THE KING!



IN THE KING'S COURT...

WHY DID YOU BREAK THE HEADS OF THOSE HOLY MEN?



YOUR MAJESTY, I ONLY DID WHAT RATNAKARA DID!



WHO IS HE? WHAT DID HE DO?



DURBUDDHI TELLS HIM WHAT HE WITNESSED IN RATNAKARA'S HOUSE - HOW A SADHU, WHEN STRUCK ON THE HEAD, CHANGED INTO A HEAP OF GOLD. I, TOO, WANTED TO...

SUMMON RATNAKARA!



To do no evil to enemies will be called the chief of all virtues.

- Thirukkural



THE SOLDIERS BRING RAT-
NAKARA TO THE COURT.



WHY DID YOU KILL A HOLY
MAN?



SIRE! I NEVER KILLED ANY
HOLY MAN! PERMIT ME TO
TELL YOU WHAT REALLY
HAPPENED.



A HOLY MAN APPEARED IN
MY DREAM. HE TOLD ME HE
WAS THE INEXHAUSTIBLE
RICHES OF MY FOREFA-
THERS. HE ASKED ME TO
HIT HIM HARD ON HIS HEAD
WITH A CLUB ...



REALLY? WHAT HAPPENED
THEN?



HE CHANGED INTO A HEAP
OF GOLD!



DURBUDDHI IS A RASCAL
AND SHALL BE HANGED
FOR HIS THOUGHTLESS
DEED.



EXECUTE HIM!



LET EVERYBODY KNOW
THAT ILL-CONCEIVED AC-
TION WILL RESULT IN DISAS-
TER.



THIS REMINDS ME OF THE
STORY OF A WOMAN AND
THE MONGOOSE.



PRAY, TELL US THE STORY,
SIRE!



Purity of body is produced by water;
purity of mind by truthfulness.

THE KING THEN NARRATES THE STORY ...



ONCE THERE LIVED A BRAHMIN NAMED DEVASARMA. HIS WIFE BROUGHT UP THEIR ONLY SON AND A MONGOOSE WITH EQUAL LOVE AND CARE.

ONE DAY, IN THE BRAHMIN'S HOUSE ...



MY DEAR! I'M GOING TO FETCH WATER FROM THE RIVER. PLEASE LOOK AFTER THE BABY TILL I RETURN.

DON'T WORRY, DEAR, HE'S ASLEEP PEACEFULLY.



I KNOW, BUT THE MONGOOSE MAY HARM HIM. DON'T LEAVE THE HOUSE TILL I COME BACK.

HOW SILLY THAT DOTING MOTHER IS!



AFTER SOME TIME ...

THE BRAHMIN LEAVES ...
BHAVATHI
BHIKSHAMDEHI!



A SNAKE CREEPS IN AND MOVES TO THE CRADLE.



HE MAY BITE MY LITTLE BROTHER. I MUST STOP HIM.

YOU, THERE! STOP! GO BACK!



I MUST KILL HIM!



An adverse fate produces folly, and a prosperous fate produces enlarged knowledge.

THE MONGOOSE FIGHTS
WITH THE SNAKE AND
TEARS HIM ...
... TO PIECES.



THE VENOMOUS RASCAL IS
DEAD! NOW, I MUST RUN TO
MOTHER WITH THE GOOD
NEWS.



THE MONGOOSE RUNS TO
THE RIVER IN JOY. THE
BRAHMIN'S WIFE SEES HIM
WITH BLOOD TRICKLING
FROM HIS MOUTH.



THE WOMAN, IN BLIND
RAGE, HITS THE MON-
GOOSE HARD WITH A
PITCHER AND KILLS HIM.



YOU ... RASCAL!

SHE RUNS HOME IN PANIC.
MY CHILD! O MY CHILD!
WHERE ARE YOU!



THANK GOD! YOU'RE
ALIVE, MY DARLING!



WHAT DO I SEE HERE! MY
GOD, MY GOD! WHAT HAVE
I DONE! WHAT A WRETCH I



THE MONGOOSE HAD
SAVED HIS LITTLE
BROTHER! AND I'VE KILLED
HIS SAVIOUR IN THOUGHT-
LESS ANGER!



HER HUSBAND NOW
RETURNS HOME ...



IF ONLY YOU HAD STAYED
AT HOME, THIS WOULD NOT
HAVE HAPPENED!

Let no one praise himself at any time; let him
not desire to do useless things.



Not much of a difference

Can there be a word 'peoples', since 'people' itself is in plural form?

-M. Vivek, Hyderabad

'People' is a plural noun. It has no singular form. We say the *people of India*, or the *people of Pakistan*. *Peoples of the world* is a better expression than *people of the world*. The dictionary lists *peoples* as a separate, accepted word.

Is there any difference between 'although' and 'though'?

- Ramachandra Ghatage, Belgaum

Both words mean the same. The word was 'all though' (*all though he studied well, he failed in his examination*) in olden times. Even if 'all' is omitted and only 'though' is used, the meaning does not change. However, the sticklers of the English language prefer the word 'although'.

What is the difference between 'costly' and 'expensive'?

- Basanti Samal, Dhenkanal

There is practically no difference at all. Both mean something for which you spend or expend a lot of money. Like "*diamond necklaces are costly*", "*maintaining a car nowadays is a costly affair*", "*my brother has all expensive habits*" or "*staying in a hotel is expensive*".

What is the difference between 'attempt' and 'endeavour'?

- Kumar Nityanand, Pune

To make an effort is to attempt; or to try to do something. For example, "*I shall attempt to finish reading the book by evening*", or "*try or attempt to reach the station early*". "Endeavour" indicates some extra effort to achieve something. Like "*we must constantly endeavour if we have to succeed*". The word simply means attempt or try!

FORTS OF INDIA - 4

Some of our clever young readers wondered whether we were giving them something like jigsaw puzzles. They wrote to us about the 'mix-up' in the APRIL issue on pages 33 and 36. The two drawings on page 33 should have gone with the text and picture captions on page 36, and the three drawings on page 36 should have taken their rightful place on page 33. Fortunately, pages 34 and 35 are intact. We are sure, every one of you will be preserving the pull-outs. You may cut out this 'box' and attach it to the 4th instalment of the series.

- Editor





ADVENTURES OF ULYSSES

After the long battle of Troy, King Ulysses of Ithaca, on his homeward voyage, has strange experiences. He escapes from the land of the lotus-eaters, as well as the rocky island where the one-eyed demon Cyclope was about to crush him. He refuses to come under the spell of Circe, who turns his companions temporarily into beasts. He sails by the island of Sirens and survives the terrible sea-monsters, Scylla and Charybdis.

The ship had been battered. Slowly it gave way. Ulysses lay on a plank and reached an island which belonged to Calypso the nymph. Calypso loved him so much that she would not let him leave her. She was preparing to make him immortal, free not only from death but also from all diseases. But Ulysses had no desire to become an

immortal. He sat by the sea, looking into the distant horizon, lost in the thoughts of his sweet home.

At last the nymph was compelled to let him go. But she had no ship or men. So, she helped him make a raft and showed how to proceed in the direction of another land which was not far.

Tired and hungry, Ulysses reached

8. HOME AT LAST!





the shores of that unknown land and lay amidst the bushes. It so happened that the princess of the land, Nausica, accompanied by her maids, had come to bathe in the sea. She took pity on the stranger and led him to her father's palace. There, after he had been properly clothed and fed, he narrated his eventful and dramatic voyage.

By then the fame of Ulysses had travelled far and wide. Nausica or her parents had never dreamt of meeting the legendary hero. They were thrilled to meet him and amazed to hear his stories. They gave him a ship by which he reached Ithaka.

Nausica bade him a tearful farewell.

Twenty years had elapsed since his leaving Ithaca for Troy. He had no idea what would have happened in the kingdom in his absence. After the ship left him, he disguised himself as a beggar and roamed around the palace for a while. He was surprised to see the palace full of princes and nobles of the nearby kingdoms. They seemed to be enjoying themselves with food and wine and playing games or idling away their time.

What were they doing there? Who invited them? How fared his wife, Penelope? How was his son who was a mere toddler when he left?

Not very far from the palace lived an old servant, Eumus by name. Ulysses went to his hut. Great was his joy when he met his son, the young and brave Telemachus, there. Old Eumus was one of those who loved the prince very much. Ulysses disclosed to them who he was. At first they could not believe their own ears and eyes. But when they knew the truth, they were overwhelmed with joy. Prince Telemachus had just then returned from a tour of some lands, trying to collect information about his long lost father.

From them Ulysses learnt all



about the situation in the palace. The princes and nobles of the lands and islands around Ithaka were sure that Ulysses was no more, that he had perished in the sea. Each one of them desired to marry Penelope, the most beautiful woman. That was why they were camping there, exploiting her hospitality. They were a group of bullies, harsh in their talk and rude in their conduct. Penelope and her son, Prince Telemachus, hated them. But what could they do? They had to silently suffer those unwelcome guests.

"Marry any one of us and we'll all go away satisfied," they said. But Penelope had never given up the

hope that her husband would one day return. Luckily for her, her father-in-law was alive. The old man lived in a small house, away from the palace, brooding over the fate of his only son, Ulysses. Penelope told her suitors: "Once I go away as the wife of one of you, who'll care for the old man? I'm weaving a woollen coat for him to protect him from the rigors of winter. Once I have completed the work, I'll marry one of you."

The suitors waited, shamelessly, eating away the wealth of Penelope. From time to time they peeped into the courtyard in which Penelope sat, weaving the garment. How could it





take such a long time to be completed? Some of them became suspicious. They bribed some maids to find out the fact. The maids informed them that what Penelope did during the day, she undid during the night. That was how the work never came to an end.

The furious suitors confronted Penelope with the fact and threatened her with dire consequences if she did not make up her mind to marry one of them. They could do anything. They could even kill her son, Telemachus.

Penelope was in great anguish. At last, she announced that she would

marry the one who could bend a bow which was dear to Ulysses and shoot an arrow from it which must pass through twelve holes made on twelve axes which would be placed in a row.

It was around this time that Ulysses had arrived. He walked into the dining hall, in the disguise of a beggar. The suitors insulted him and even physically assaulted him. He bore with all that, waiting for his moment.

The contest to bend the bow of Ulysses and shoot an arrow to pass through twelve axes began. The first suitor failed to bend it. The others, too, hardly fared better. When all of them had failed, Ulysses took up the challenge. The suitors had a hearty laugh at his audacity. But Ulysses, after playing with his favourite bow for a while, shot an arrow, which passed through the holes on the twelve axes.

To the suitors struck with wonder, he then revealed his identity.

"I'm Ulysses, whom you brutes took for dead and whose wife and son you have shamelessly harassed for long. Now it's time for you to pay the price for it!" As he said this, he lifted his bow and fixed an arrow to it. The suitors unsheathed their



swords and rushed upon him. But Ulysses was ready to face them. So, was Prince Telemachus and two of their old servants whom Ulysses had taken into confidence.

It was a bloody riotous scene. One by one, the suitors fell to the arrows shot by Ulysses. When there were no more arrows, Ulysses used a spear. His son's sword, too, circled like a string of lightning. In a short time the hall was quiet, except for the heavy breathing of the father and the son and their two old faithful servants.

The old nurse of Ulysses, who had recognised him, ran into the apartments and informed Penelope of the return of her husband. Penelope came out to meet him, but did not show any sign of emotion.

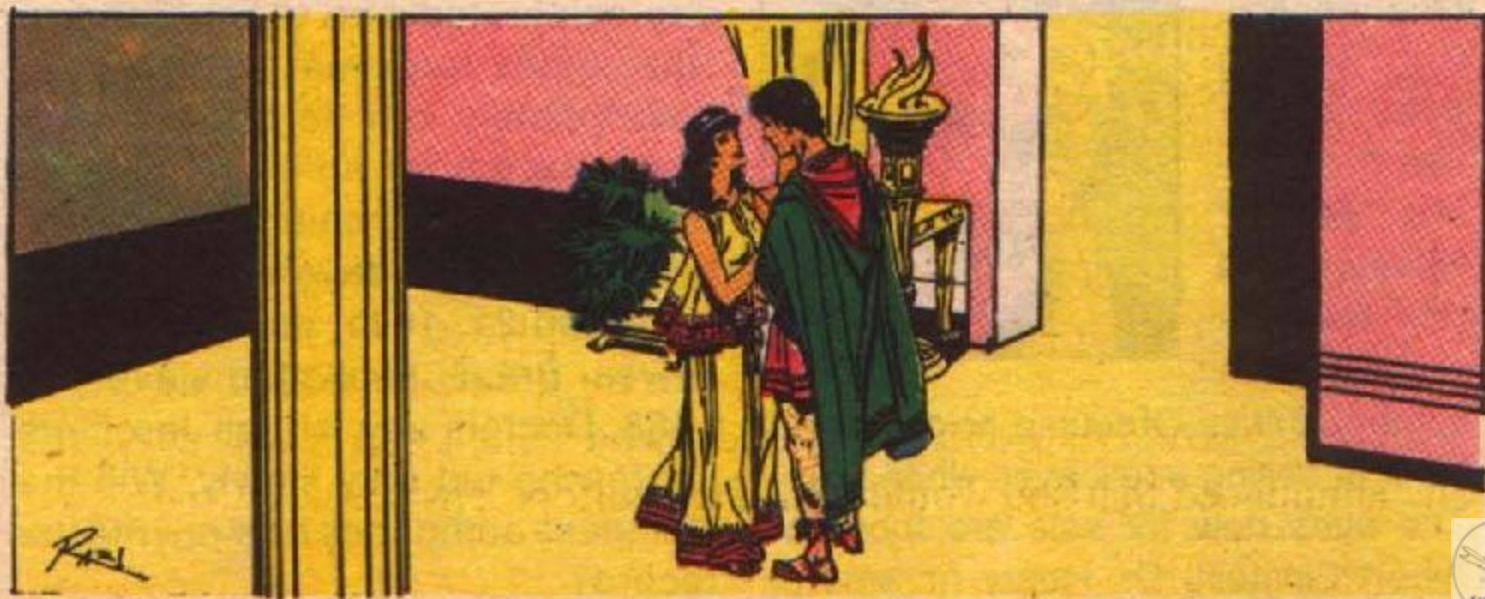
Surprised, Ulysses asked her,

"Aren't you happy at the sight of your husband? Wouldn't you welcome me into the house?"

Only when Penelope heard his voice and through other signs also knew that the man was none other than Ulysses, she broke into tears and fell into his arms.

Delighted were Penelope and Ulysses, and delighted were Prince Telemachus and the old king, father of Ulysses. Ithaca went festive.

Thus ended the strange adventures of Ulysses. He lived happily thereafter, with his ideal wife Penelope and brave son Prince Telemachus. The great poet, Homer made their memory immortal through his two epics, *Iliad*, which narrates the battle of Troy, and *Odyssey*, which narrates the story of our hero's voyage. **(Concluded)**



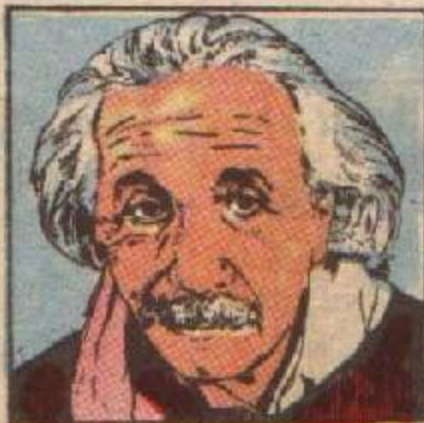
NEWS FLASH

ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

Kutralteeswaran of Madras and many other boys and girls of his age group have by now shown the world that crossing the seas (at straits) is just child's play. The French swimmer, Gee Delage, did something which none else has so far attempted—swim the Atlantic Ocean, yes, alone. He started from Cape Verde, in Africa, on December 16 and swam across the ocean to reach Bridgetown, in Barbados, 3,860 km away, two months later. He used flippers while swimming and slept on a 4 metre long raft. His sons, 9-year-old Thomas and 5-year-old Clement, along with their mother Catherine, were at Bridgetown to greet him as he waded out of water, muttering: "I'll never do that again!"

EYES FOR SALE

Eye donation is, these days, considered a laudable humanitarian service. But selling eyes is unheard of, unlike "selling" kidney which has become common in some countries. Of course, no one would think of selling one's eyes when alive. The eyes now for sale are those of Albert Einstein. Dr. Henry Abrams of



Loveladies, in the U.K., claims that the pair of eyes preserved in a jar in his possession are of the famous physicist. And there are bidders to buy them for a fabulous price. The popular singing star, Michael Jackson, is reported to be interested in buying the pair. When Einstein died forty years ago, in 1955, an autopsy was conducted on the body. Dr. Thomas Harvey, who performed it and who has the scientist's brain, says the eyes were never removed. The dispute remains.

CLAIM FOR CROWN

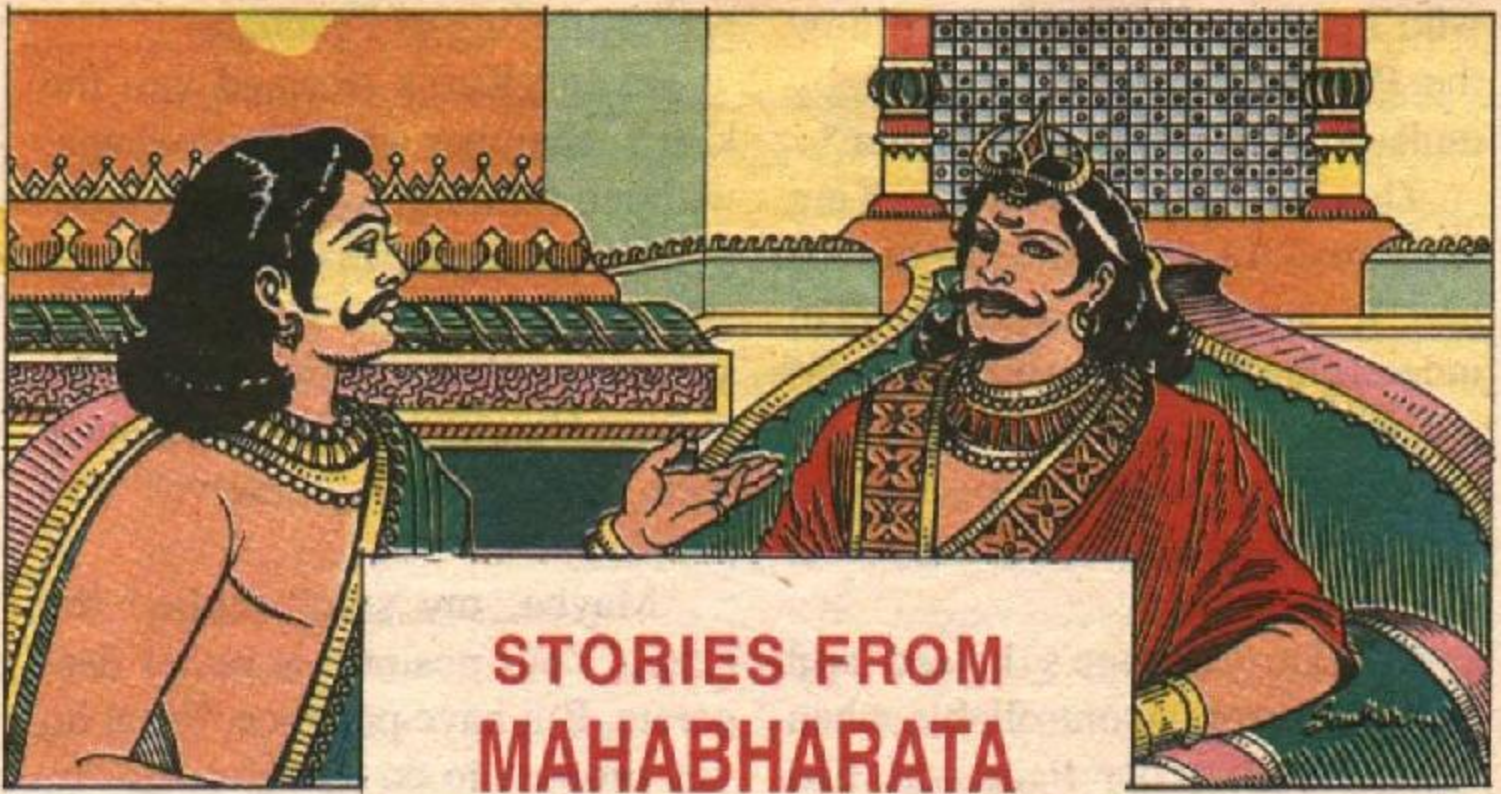
This is no royal contest, never the



Gene Lucy Calment

less a claim has been made to be crowned as the 'grand old woman' by the Guinness Book of Records. At present that

entry is in the name of Gene Lucy Calment, of France, who the other day celebrated her 121st birthday. Now comes Jeronima, of Brazil, who unfortunately has no documentary proof, except for an entry made in the register in the church where she was baptised 17 days after her birth on March 21, 1871, into a family of slaves. Brazil abolished slavery in 1888. Doctors say, 4ft tall Jeronima is growing old only slowly. Will the Guinness authorities now rewrite the record?



STORIES FROM MAHABHARATA

The story so far :

Dhritarashtra, the blind king, and his sons plot to kill the late King Pandu's sons and their mother, Kunti, by setting fire to the house where they are staying. Thanks to the help of Vidura, the wise counsellor, they escape and live for several years disguised as Brahmins.

In course of time, they hear of the approaching marriage of Draupadi, the princess of Panchala. All the princes of the country are invited. The bride will choose her husband from among the assembled royalty, according to the ancient 'Swayamvara' custom.

At this ceremony, Arjuna wins the hand of Draupadi, who becomes the wife of the five Pandava princes.

When the news of what took place at the Swayamvara reached Hastinapura, Vidura was overjoyed. He immediately went to King Dhritarashtra and said: "O King, our stars are strong because the daughter of King Drupada is now our daughter-in-law."

The king, in his befuddled thinking, assumed that it was his son

Duryodhana who had won the hand of Princess Draupadi. Turning to Vidura, he cried, "You must go at once and bring Draupadi to Hastinapura, so that we can all celebrate my son's happiness."

"No, Your Majesty," said the jubilant Vidura. "The Pandava princes and Kunti had escaped from that awful fire, and it was Arjuna

who had won Draupadi. And now the Pandavas are well and happy under the care of King Drupada."

This was a sad blow for King Dhritarashtra. Of course, he did his best to conceal his anguish. "I'm indeed glad to hear that the Pandavas are alive. This is wonderful news, and we must invite them back to Hastinapura, together with our new daughter-in-law."

But Duryodhana's hatred and jealousy were uncontrollable when he learnt that the Pandavas had managed to escape from the house of wax that he had constructed for them, and were now even more to be feared, after their alliance with the

powerful King of Panchala.

He and Karna stormed into the king's chamber and Duryodhana, without mincing words, shouted: "These accursed Pandavas are now stronger than ever. They must be suspecting that we tried to murder them at Varanasi. Either we destroy them now, or we ourselves will perish."

"Maybe, my son," replied the king. "Your position is rather desperate. But have patience. What do you propose to do now?"

Duryodhana shook his head. "I really don't know. Perhaps we can take advantage of the fact that all the five Pandava brothers are not born



of the same mother and create enmity between them. Or better still, can't we bribe the King of Panchala to become our ally?"

Karna, standing there, just smiled and said, "Absurd!"

Duryodhana glared at Karna. "Have you a better plan to offer?"

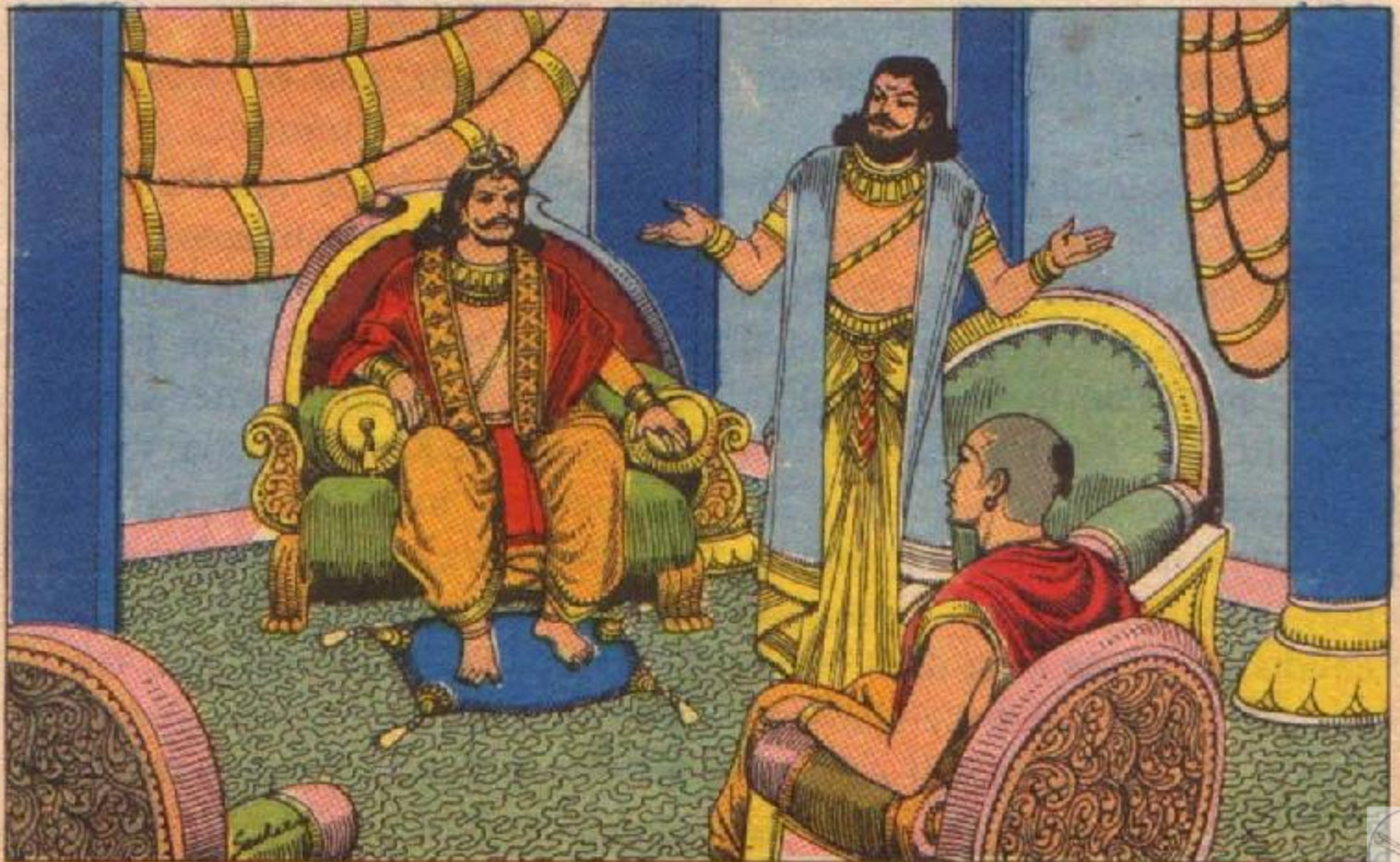
"Your proposals are unrealistic," replied Karna. "When the Pandavas were here, your attempts to drown Bhima and murder them at Varanasi proved futile. Now the Pandavas will be hard to deceive. Therefore, there is only one way left for us. It must be war! We must make a surprise attack on them and King Drupada, before Krishna can join

them with his Yadava army."

The king could not make up his mind in regard to such a bold step. He sent for Bhishma, Vidura, and Drona, to get their opinion.

When Bhishma was told that Karna had suggested open war, he was horrified. "This is evil advice, and evil has a way of not only destroying itself, but also others. The proper course will be to welcome the Pandavas back and give them half of the kingdom. This is the only way to dispel all the loose talk and suspicion regarding what occurred at Varanasi, and to maintain the dignity of our dynasty. This is my advice."

Drona, without hesitation, gave





the same counsel and suggested sending a suitable envoy to Panchala to bring about an amicable settlement between the two camps and establish peace.

Listening to all this, Karna completely lost his temper. "This is the talk of cowards. I'm surprised that Drona, who has received so much power and wealth from this kingdom, should be frightened of the Pandavas."

Drona, his eyes blazing with anger, turned on Karna. "You speak childishly. If the king does not do what Bhishma and myself have advised, the Kauravas will certainly

meet with destruction."

At this, Dhritarashtra appealed to Vidura for his opinion.

"O king," solemnly declared Vidura, "the advice given by Bhishma and Drona is wise and just. It's true that Drupada and his son, as well as Krishna and the Yadavas, are staunch allies of the Pandavas and it would be impossible to beat them in a battle. Also remember that there are rumours that we tried to kill the Pandavas at Varanasi. The people won't tolerate any further injustice to the Pandavas. So, be wise and follow Bhishma's advice."

In the end, and to the dismay of Duryodhana and Karna, the king decided to establish peace by giving half of the kingdom to the sons of his brother Pandu, and he instructed Vidura to go immediately to Panchala and bring the Pandavas and Draupadi to Hastinapura.

Vidura lost no time in going to Panchala, taking with him jewels and many costly gifts. After paying due honour to King Drupada, Vidura requested him, on behalf of Dhritarashtra, to send the Pandavas to Hastinapura.

Drupada, who did not trust Dhritarashtra, merely said the Pandavas could do as they pleased.



When Vidura later met Kunti, she said, "I'm suspicious of Dhritarashtra's intentions, but you saved our lives at Varanasi. So, we shall do as you advise."

"Fear nothing," said Vidura. "Your children will never meet with destruction. For, they will inherit a great kingdom and acquire renown far and wide."

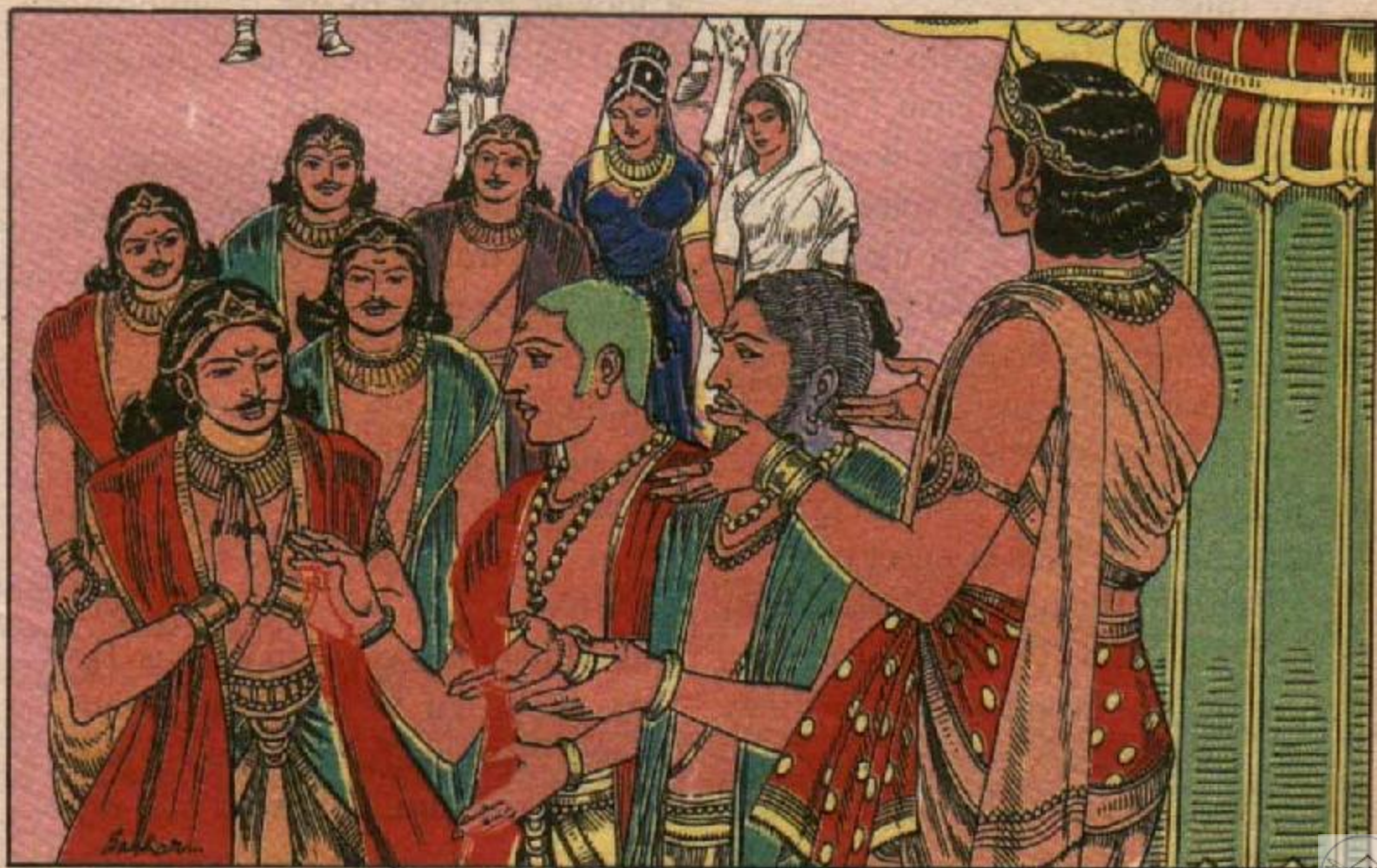
And so Vidura returned to Hastinapura accompanied by the Pandavas, Kunti, and Draupadi. As a jubilant welcome to their beloved princes, who were returning home after many years, the streets of the city were strewn with flowers and

thronged with crowds.

In accordance with Dhritarashtra's decree, the Kuru kingdom was divided. King Dhritarashtra and his sons retained the eastern and richer portion with its ancient capital Hastinapura. Yudhishtira, the eldest of the Pandava princes, was crowned king of the western portion of the kingdom, which was then a forest and a wilderness on the river Jumna.

The sons of Pandu cleared the forests, and the ruins of the ancient city of Khandavaprastha, and built palaces and forts for a new capital, which they named Indraprastha.

(To continue)





When Fairies Danced

When we were children, my Naniji used to tell us one particular story, which we all listened to in rapt attention. We heard it from her over and over again.

According to grandmother, it was a true occurrence. It went something like this:

I was a girl of ten years then. We lived in a small village of Punjab. Our home was on the outskirts of the village. There was a little wood near the house. A small brook ran through it. In the daylight hours, we children would go and pluck wild flowers and berries and generally have a merry time there. It was a beautiful place, all green and peaceful, with birds twittering and squirrels coming down from the trees to gather nuts.

One day, I wandered a little deeper into the wood. That spot was even lovelier. The brook took a turn there. The clear waters gurgled. The waters were shallow. I waded through

to the other side, because I saw some beautiful flowers.

I plucked a few sweet-smelling flowers. Then strangely I did not want to pick any more. That was when I noticed that the flowers made a perfect circle. I was very surprised. I looked around to see if anybody lived there. Who could have planted these wild flowers like this? But there was no evidence of anyone. I looked again. Yes, the flowers made a perfect circle. I looked more carefully. This variety of flowers I had never seen before.

I then heard my friends shouting for me. I ran towards them, not wanting to share this secret with them. I went home.

What a joy awaited me! My grandfather had come to visit us. He was supposed to know all about fairies, elves, and pixies. I ran to him and hugged him. I showed him my

flowers and then very confidentially told him about the 'perfect circle' near the brook. He looked at the flowers and told me I should not have plucked these flowers. I told him, "Yes, *Dada*, I did not want to pick any more after taking these few."

He said, "Show me this place tomorrow." I was only too happy to share my wonder place with him.

'Tomorrow' dawned. We both set out for our little adventure. *Dada* seemed excited. We reached the place in the little wood. I ran through the waters, pointing out the flowers to *Dada*.

He looked at the flowers. He walked around and nodded his head. I wanted to know what he was thinking. He said, "This is where the fairies come and dance on a Purnima (full moon) night." I looked at him, my eyes round and mouth wide open. "Fairies?" I asked excitedly.

He said, "Yes. Do you want to see their dance?"

I could not believe my ears. Then what he said sank in. I jumped up and down, clapping my hands and tugging at his *kurta*. "Dada, yes, please show them to me."

"Tomorrow is Purnima. At night, we'll come here and at twelve O'clock you will see the fairies dance. But,



don't tell anybody about it." I agreed. I would have agreed to anything then.

The day dawned – after a year, it seemed to me. I had not slept at night. I did not know how I could wait till night. Finally, we both sneaked out of the house and headed for the little wood. We reached the place. *Dada* and I stationed ourselves behind a tree overlooking the circle of flowers. He sat down cross-legged and made me sit beside him. He took out his *Japamala* and, closing his eyes, started doing japa of a certain *mantra*. (He told me this later on.) He said, "You cannot see them like this. I'm chanting this mantra so that they be-



come visible to you." I was excited and tense. The place looked beautiful. Everything looked ethereal in the moonlight. I waited impatiently.

Dada said, "Quiet now", and touched me lightly on the forehead. I was absolutely still, virtually holding my breath. First I thought I was imagining. I looked at Dada. He smiled and with signs affirmed what I was asking him. I could hear music. I had never heard something like that before. Then, suddenly, before my eyes unfolded a scene. I can never forget or fully describe how the fairies descended into that circle of flowers. They wore clothes which seemed to reflect the light of the moon. The whole place became aglow. I held my breath. For fifteen minutes after that I was transported into a world unknown. They danced to the strains of some divine music. Their steps were so light that it seemed they did not step on the

ground. I could now vaguely understand what 'Raslila' of Krishna and the gopis must have been like. I cannot express the emotions arising within me at that time.

The dance got over. The fairies vanished. The music stopped. Dada touched me on the shoulder and said, "Come."

We got back home. I could not sleep the whole night. The next morning, I went to Dada. I wanted to confirm that what we had witnessed was not my imagination. He smiled and looked at me. It was all real. He said, "Now they will not dance there again." And added knowingly, "Even the circle of flowers will not be there."

I ran all the way to see whether he was correct. I crossed the brook and beheld that, as he had said, the flowers had also disappeared. It was all over.

Naniji's story, Fairies' Dance, has ever remained with me.

-Uma Chopra



A Chandamama pull-out

THE FORTS OF INDIA - 5

The Forts of Central India

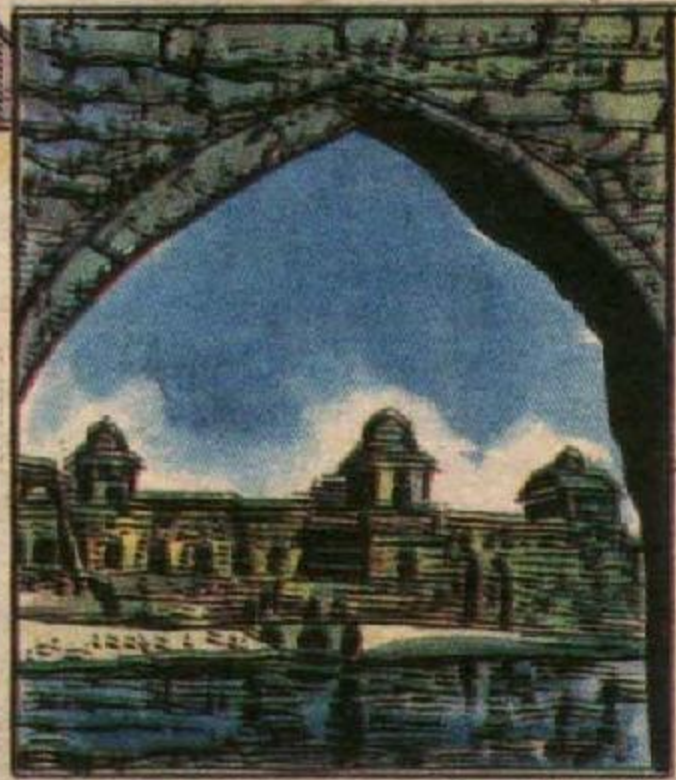
Text : Meera Ugra ♦ Drawings : Aritra

Originally called Mandap Durg, the Mandu Fort in south-west Madhya Pradesh was rebuilt by the Parmar kings in the 12th century.

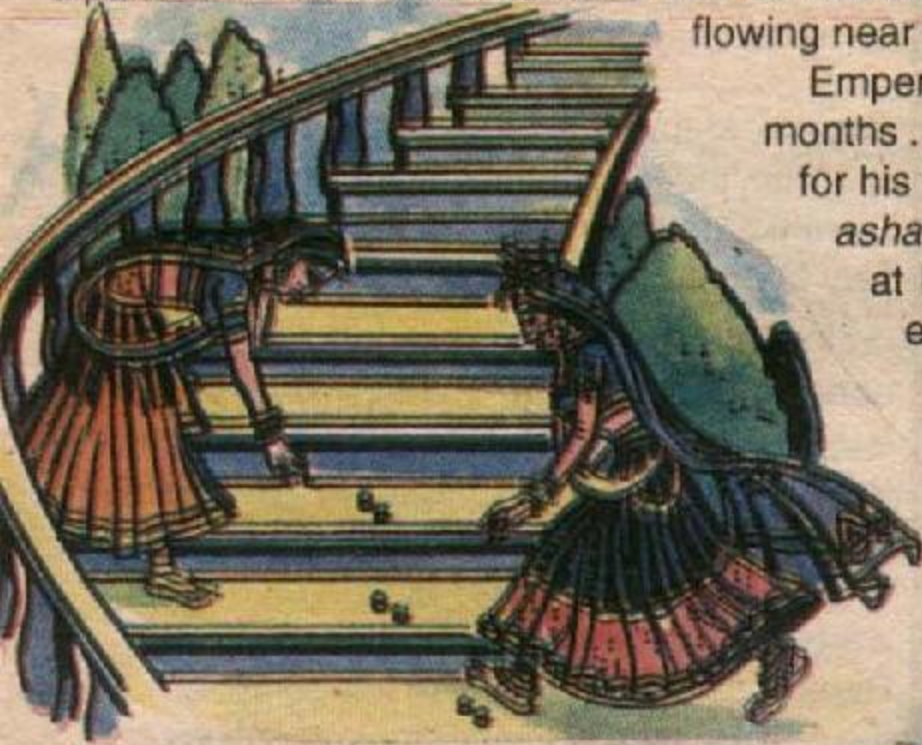
Sultan Baz Bahadur who ruled around 1550 was a great lover of music and architecture. The palace he built for Rupmati, a singer of repute, commands a panoramic view. The Narmada river can be seen

flowing near the horizon.

Emperor Jahangir once stayed here for seven months . He built a palace with 198 steps for his queen Noor Jahan and two *asharfis* (gold coins) were placed at her feet as she climbed each step.

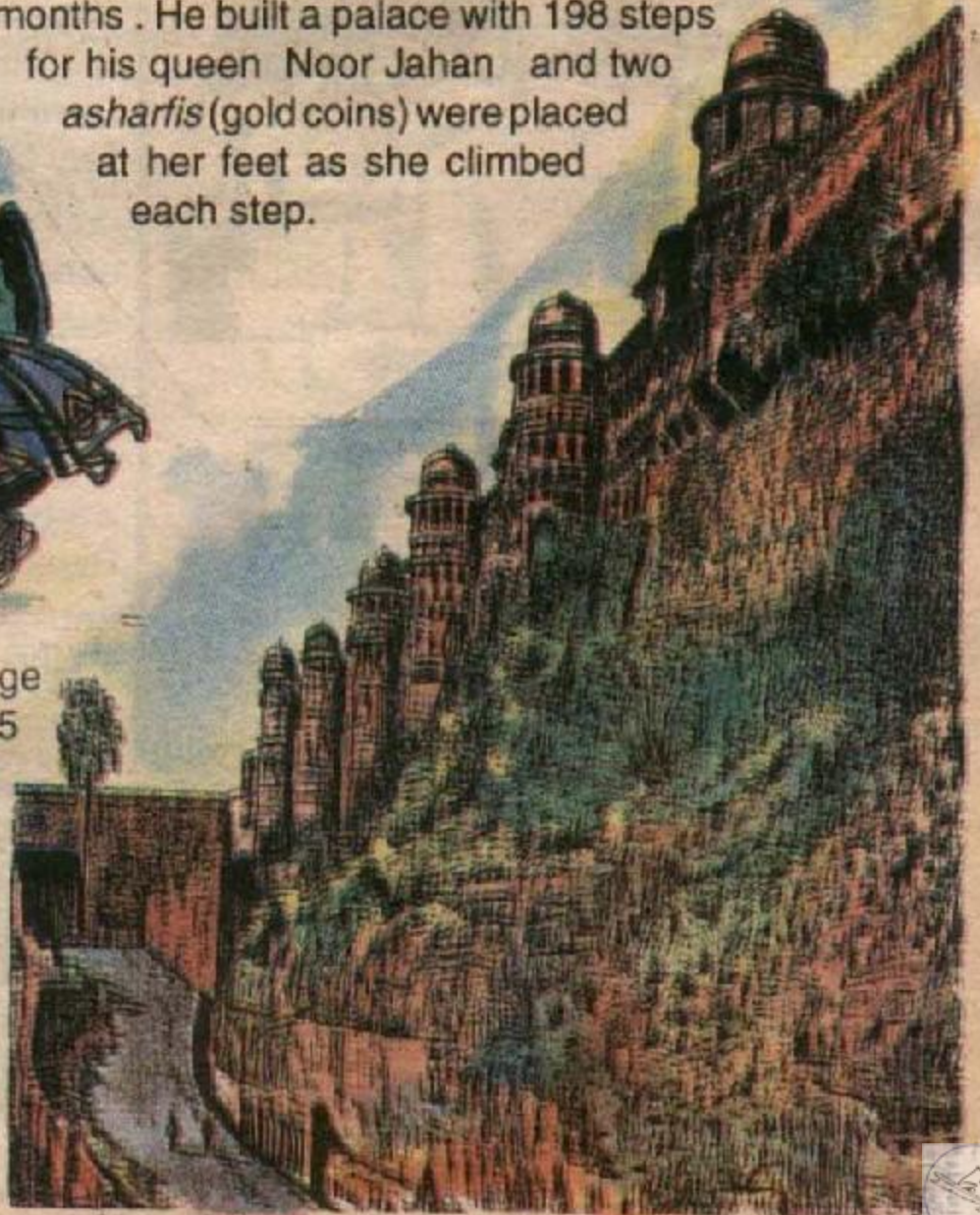


Mandu



The Gwalior Fort, named after sage Gwalip, was built by Suraj Sen in 525 A.D. The fort, situated on a steep flat-topped hill, saw a period of glory during the rule of the Tomara kings (1388-1518).

The most illustrious of them, Man Singh, built the famous Man Mandir. Two storeys of this four-storeyed palace are built underground. **Man Mandir, Gwalior**



Music and arts flourished under his patronage. Mohammed Ghaus and his famous disciple Tansen lived at Gwalior. The music tradition evolved here is called the Gwalior *Gharana* of music.



▲ The Tansen Samadhi



The Statue of Adinath

Gigantic statues of the Jaina *Teerthankars* cut into the rock faces stand near the Urvahi gate. The statue of Adinath is 19 feet tall.

In 1857, during the days of the great uprising the Gwalior soldiers mutinied and joined Lakshmibai and Tatya Tope. In May 1858, the two captured Gwalior and drove away the Scindia king, an ally of the British, to Agra. However, they were soon challenged by Sir Hugh Rose. Rani Lakshmibai died in an encounter on the 17th June 1858. Her *samadhi* stands on the spot where she was cremated.

The Chunar, Rohtasgarh and Kalinjar forts of Central India were considered impregnable. Sher Khan (Sher Shah Sur) took all three, but by different means each time.





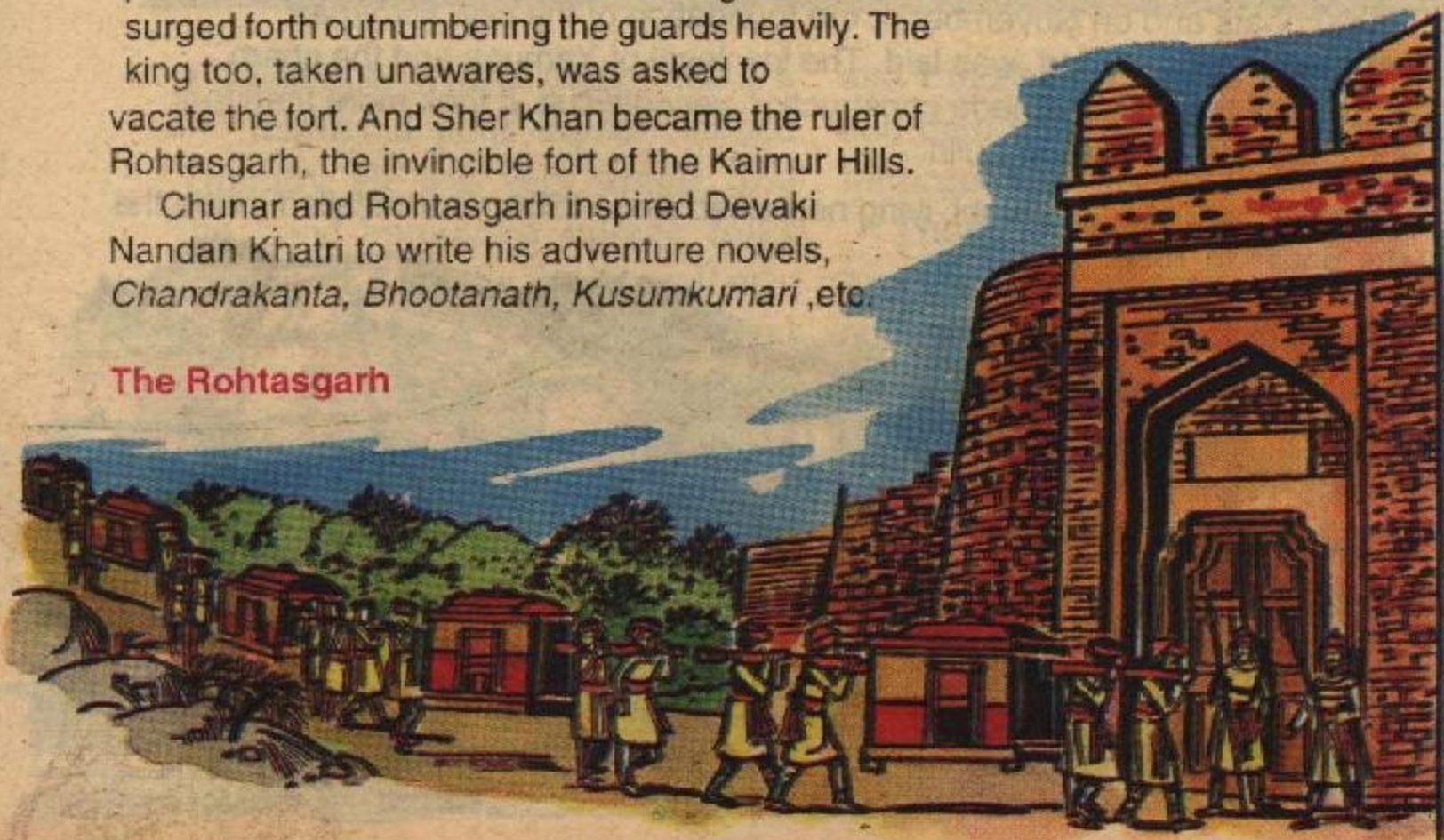
The Chunar Fort in eastern U.P. stands on a steep rock of the Vindhyas. On one side the hill juts out into the river Ganga, making an enemy's approach almost impossible. Sher Khan acquired it in 1531 by marrying Begum Lad Malika, the widow of the Subedar Taj Khan.

The Chunar Fort

By 1538, Sher Khan had lost the Chunar Fort to Humayun and was in search of a base. He devised a plan and requested shelter for his family at Rohtasgarh. The Rajput king of Rohtasgarh willingly agreed and 700 palanquins were carried inside the fort. The guards checked the first fifty and on finding only old women inside allowed the rest to proceed unchecked. And lo! armed Afghan soldiers surged forth outnumbering the guards heavily. The king too, taken unawares, was asked to vacate the fort. And Sher Khan became the ruler of Rohtasgarh, the invincible fort of the Kaimur Hills.

Chunar and Rohtasgarh inspired Devaki Nandan Khatri to write his adventure novels, *Chandrakanta*, *Bhootanath*, *Kusumkumari*, etc.

The Rohtasgarh





The Kalinjar Fort

The Kalinjar Fort on the Vindhya is one of the oldest forts of India. The Greek historian, Ptolemy, refers to it as *Kangaur*.

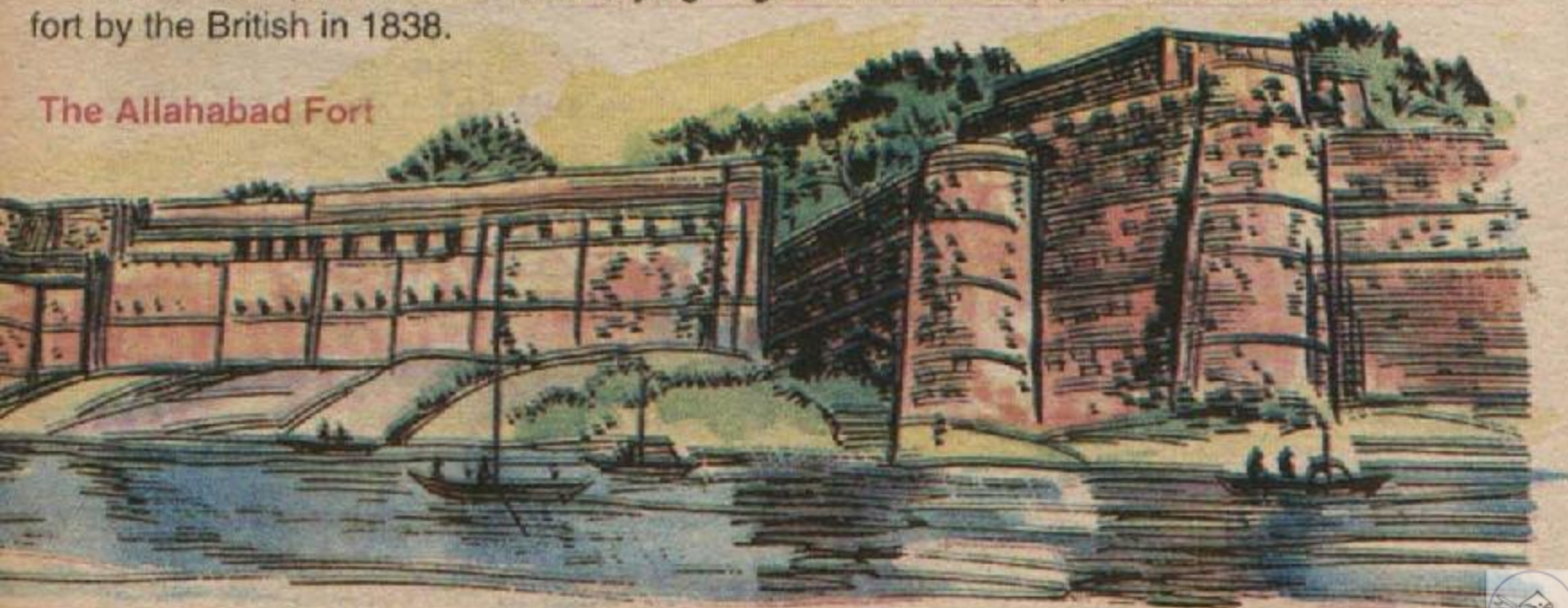
Kirti Singh Chandela ruled it in 1545 when Sher Shah Sur's army laid siege to it. When a year passed without the fort's capture, Sher Shah arrived to supervise the operations himself.

On May 21, 1545, a cannon-ball fired by the Afghan army hit the massive doors, ricocheted and landed on a pile of explosives outside. Sher Shah was injured seriously in the ensuing explosion. His army attacked with vengeance and succeeded in making a breach in a wall the next day. Kirti Singh was captured and executed. But the victory proved meaningless as Sher Shah, too, died of his wounds.

The Allahabad Fort, near Prayag on the confluence of the rivers Ganga and Yamuna, was built by the Mughal emperor Akbar. He arrived here in 1583 with a flotilla of 300 boats and on November 4, the foundation of the city, *Illahabas* (Illaha+Abaas), abode of God, was laid. The low level of Yamuna and the sharp, cutting current of the Ganga made construction very difficult. It took more than ten years and about Rs.6 crores to build.

The Ashoka pillar of Kaushambi, lying neglected since 1380, was installed inside the fort by the British in 1838.

The Allahabad Fort



KING TIMOTHY



Once upon a time, there lived in a hamlet a poor orphan named Timothy. He was very simple, and the good-humoured village folks called him Timothy the King. It was because his poor mother, who died soon after giving birth to Timothy, had said as her last words, "I feel like a king's mother!"

The lad did not mind being called a king. In fact, he liked it; it made him feel grand and great.

One fine morning, Timothy set out to seek his fortune. 'I am a king

and I must find a castle for myself and then a princess for a wife,' he innocently said to himself.

Though he was simple, he had in him a spirit of adventure. He walked and walked with a flicker of hope in his heart and, at nightfall, reached a dense forest. Suddenly, in the darkness, he saw the glimmer and shimmer of a bright light. He eagerly made his way towards it and soon came to a clearing in the woods. In its midst stood a magnificent castle. The hungry and tired lad knocked at



its huge wooden door. There was no answer.

'Am I not King Timothy? Why should I hesitate to enter a castle?' he said to himself and pushing the door open, stepped in confidently.

He stood in a large hall of white shining marble. So big it was that Timothy looked like a speck of dust in it. Not a soul was there. Far away at the other end of the hall dazzled a golden door. The boy took some time to reach it and when he opened it, he found it leading to another great room. Now, this one was not empty, but was piled from floor to ceiling with pieces of gold and

silver.

He had but picked up a couple of coins when suddenly there seemed to be an earthquake, accompanied by thunder. The floor shook and the walls shuddered and, to his horror, Timothy saw two enormous giants stepping in.

"We smell human blood! Ha, ha, ha!" they laughed, and one of them picked up Timothy in his hand.

"So you are trying to steal our wealth, you little squirrel! Just squeeze the breath out of him, brother," said the other giant, goggling his furnace-like red eyes.

"Put me down!" shouted the lad. "What good will it do to you to squash me? Well, I thought this was *my* castle. Don't you know that I am none other than King Timothy? But after all, if this beautiful mansion is yours and you don't want anybody here, then why do you leave your door unlocked?"

"Well, you seem to be a smart little boy! There is some logic in what you say," said the first giant putting the boy down on the floor.

"You are rather brave for your puny size! If we don't squeeze the breath out of you, then will you stay here and guard our treasure?" proposed the other ogre who had begun



to like Timothy.

"I shouldn't mind doing that for you. But what about my food? I can't eat your gold and silver!" asked the lad, who was by then very hungry.

The first giant at once pulled out a wee little table from his locket, unfolded it and set it on the floor.

"When you are hungry, just rap on this table tap tap tap and order, 'A dinner for an emperor!' There will appear before you all that you wish to eat and enjoy," said the second giant.

"Now brother, it is time for us to be off on our great travels," reminded the other. "Good luck to you, little friend, and guard our treasure well."

There was once again a brief earthquake. The floors shook and the walls shuddered as the two giants walked away and disappeared in the night.

Timothy was happy and he revelled himself in the spacious castle. He looked into one room after another, climbed onto the tower-like chairs and slept on one huge bed after another to find which one suited him best. When he felt hungry he had but to rap on the table tap tap tap and pronounce the magical words. The table at once expanded itself and was laid with the most delicious



dishes.

Thus days passed into weeks and weeks into months but the giants did not return. In fact nobody came, not even a robber to steal the room full of gold and silver. Timothy began to feel very lonely and bored, indeed.

"What's the use of guarding a treasure that nobody comes to steal?" he wondered at last and putting the table into his pocket, walked away.

He had but gone a short distance when he met a gnome sitting under a tree and sighing all the while.

"What's the matter with you?" asked Timothy kindly.

"I am famished. Could you give





me a morsel of food?" he said in reply.

"Why only a morsel of food? You will have a sumptuous meal," said the lad excitedly and rapping on the table tap tap tap, he uttered the magic words.

In a trice the table spread itself with the choicest of food and sweetest of drinks. The little man helped himself and ate and ate till his belly could hold no more.

"Will you, dear boy, give me this table in exchange of something more precious?" asked the dwarf with a chuckle.

"What is it?" enquired Timothy

curiously.

The gnome unslung a golden trumpet hanging from his shoulder and said, "Well, you have only to blow on this trumpet and out of it will appear an army, the bravest one."

"Ah! A king should have an army of his own," said the lad and exchanged the table for the trumpet.

'When one day I find my kingdom, the army will protect it from all invasions,' he thought as he continued on his way whistling a merry tune.

It was not before long when King Timothy began to feel hungry. His stomach gnawed and he could not take a step further. 'Oh my dear little table, you and I should never have parted,' he repented.

But Timothy, though simple, was not lacking in intelligence. What do you think he did at this hour of crisis in the middle of the forest? Well, he blew on his trumpet and out poured armed knights on horseback. Then the captain rode up to him, bowed and said, "What are your orders, Master?"

"Look for a dwarf with a table under his arm. Bring me only the table, but do no harm to its owner," ordered the young man.



In a flash the knights galloped off and within the twinkle of an eye they came galloping back with the table.

"Thank you very much, my army friends," said King Timothy. "Now you may dismiss yourselves."

Like a wisp of smoke the knights and the horses entered the golden trumpet.

A delighted Timothy now ate to his full satisfaction. Then he slung the trumpet on his back, put the table into his pocket, and walked on with a song on his lips.

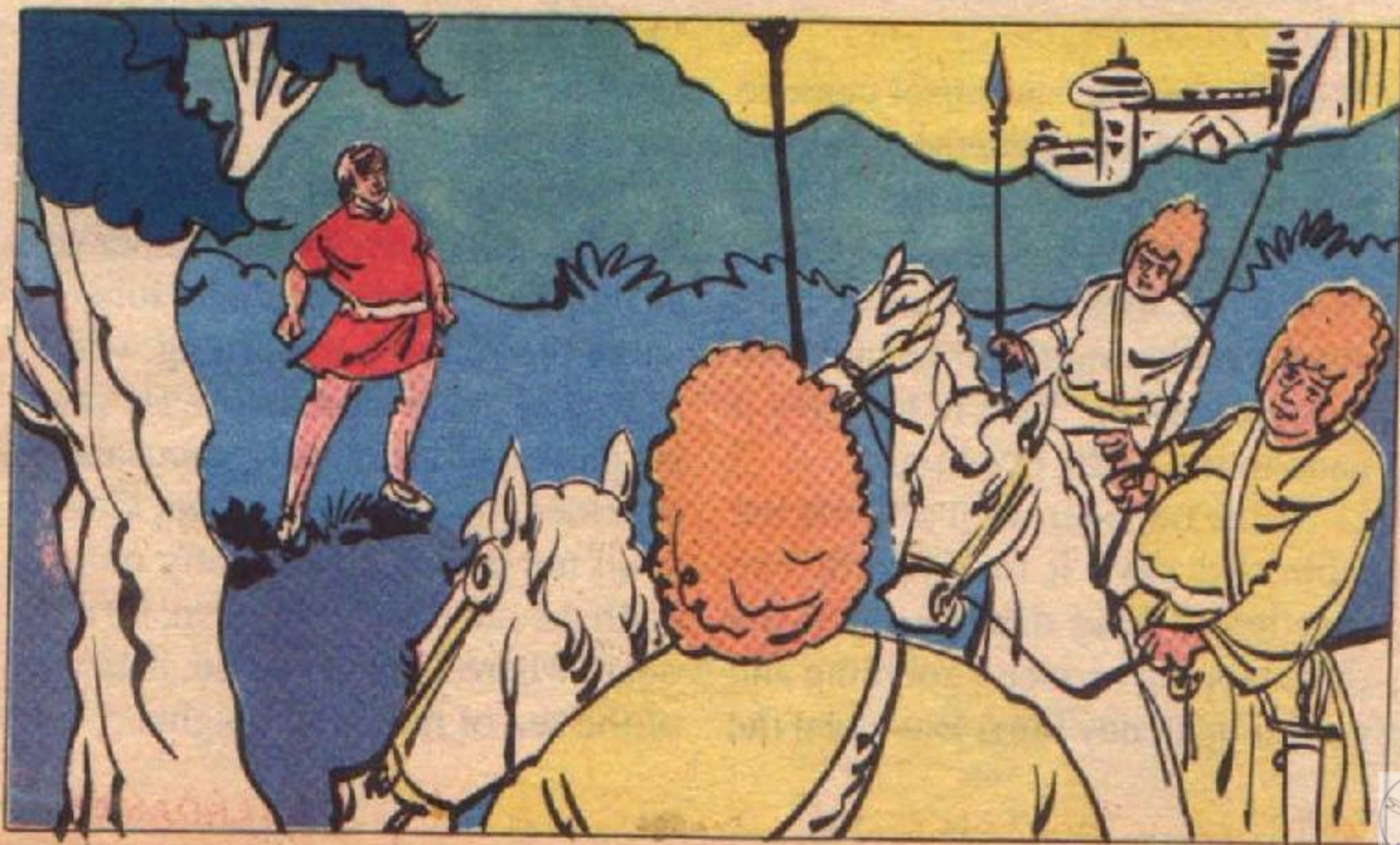
He walked a long and weary way and at last reached an inn. He went in and asked if he could have a bed to rest awhile.

"Certainly," replied the inn-keeper. "But, Sir, what would you like to have for dinner?"

"What? You will serve *me* dinner? I will instead give you and your wife a feast, the like of which you have never enjoyed in your life!" said the lad to a surprised couple.

So Timothy brought out the table, unfolded it and placed it in the centre of the room. He rapped on it tap tap tap and said, "A dinner for an emperor!" The three of them then sat down to a royal feast.

On the morrow, the news of the wonderful table spread far and wide and reached the long ears of the king, too. He smacked his lips, for





he was a very greedy fellow, and thought that it was he who deserved to possess such a table and none other.

Soon the king's minister came to Timothy and asked whether he would mind lending his table to His Majesty.

"By all means! A king should always oblige another!" he said with innocent pride. "Take it, but give it back to me in the evening."

So the minister went off with the table and gave it to his lord. The greedy old king danced round the table tapping on it and gobbling and gobbling all day long. But when the

hour for the table to be given back approached, he did not want to part with it.

"How can I be a fool to deprive myself of its services? No cook in my realm can prepare such delicious dishes!" said the old king.

He was not only greedy but a cunning one, too. So what did he do? He had an exact copy of the table made and sent it to Timothy and kept the magical one for himself.

Soon Timothy knew that he had been tricked by the wicked king. He at once sent a warning to him that if he failed to return the table within a day, then he would go with an army to fetch it.

"Ha, ha, ha," laughed the greedy old king when he got the message. "A simple lad dares threaten me! He has an army, too! Must be an army of cockroaches!"

The king laughed and laughed and then sat down for his dinner of an emperor. But he could no longer laugh the following morning when he looked out of his window. He saw his palace surrounded by thousands of armed men. No, he did not laugh at all nor did he chuckle any more. With the table under his arm, he ran out to where Timothy stood, in front of the sea of mounted knights.



"I am indeed a very mean and greedy old man. Pardon me and I will give you my beautiful daughter's hand," he said, bowing to the lad.

Timothy thought that it was not a bad proposal. After all, he was going to marry a real princess! So they were soon married and the king gave his kingdom to his son-in-law.

So, the simple Timothy's dream came true! He had married a real princess and become a real king too! But often he remained pensive and sad, for his conscience greatly troubled him. What had he done? Well, he had walked away with the giants' table without having taken their permission and he had grievously wronged the little gnome.

"Then go at once and return the table to the giants and seek the dwarf out and ask for his pardon," advised his young but wise queen.

On a fine white horse sped King Timothy and reached the great castle

in the midst of the forest. The giants were in. He apologised to them and returned the table.

"Now that you are our king, O Friend, retain this table as a gift from us," said the giants much touched by the lad's sincerity, and they gave him many more presents.

Timothy on his way back searched out the old dwarf. He asked his pardon and offered back the table.

"Oh! A king asking pardon of his humble subject!" said the little man with tears in his eyes. "Take me to your palace and I will most happily serve you there."

So the cute little gnome was appointed the king's chamberlain. But he had the royal sanction to use the magic table whenever he wished.

King Timothy and his wise queen ruled happily for many many years and not a single man in his realm ever went hungry.

– Retold by Anup Kishore Das



Towards Peace in Ireland

St. Patrick's Day is very important for the people of Ireland. In the 4th century B.C., Ireland was a colony of the Celts. Christianity came to Ireland 900 years later, thanks to Patrick. Born in Britain, he was taken away by pirates. Later, he trained as a missionary and reached Ireland around A.D. 450 and spread Christianity there. He is thus considered as the Patron Saint of Ireland, and remembered on March 17.

This year, on March 17, the White House in Washington held a reception, which was attended by two Irish leaders – Prime Minister John Bruton and Mr. Gerry Adams, who heads the Sinn Fein. Britain was not very happy over Washington's invitation to Mr. Adams, because the Sinn Fein leader is often described as the political mouthpiece of the Irish Republican Army which had waged a war with Britain for the last 25 years. The American argument was, the IRA had already announced a cease-fire and since September, Sinn Fein had been holding parleys with Britain towards the establishment of everlasting peace.


Ireland is divided into Northern Island which is linked to the United Kingdom (Great Britain, Scotland and Wales), and the southern portion called Eire, or the Republic of Ireland. In 1916, there was a revolt in Ireland which was then under Great Britain's governance. In 1921, the southern portion became the Irish Free State. It left the British Commonwealth and became the Re-

public of Ireland in 1949. Eamon de Valera, who took part in the revolt of 1916 - called the Easter Rising - and who suffered imprisonment, became leader of the nationalist party, Sinn Fein, in 1917 and carried on negotiations with Britain, without much success. He became Prime Minister in 1932 and President in 1959.

While the Protestant majority in Northern Island supported its link with Britain, the Roman Catholic minority preferred a union with the Republic. A violent conflict broke out in the North in 1969 following protests by Catholics that they were being discriminated. The skirmishes with Britain were spear-headed by the IRA, which was formed to fight for the unification of Ireland. And for 25 long years, they clashed with the British army, resulting in the death of over 3,000 persons. The political fight with Britain was being carried on by Sinn Fein, which pressed for a settlement of the Irish issue ever since the IRA cried a halt to its guerrilla war towards the end of August 1994.

The U.S.A., which had once declared the Sinn Fein as a terrorist organisation and banned any contact with the group, changed its stand after the IRA announced a cease-fire. President Bill Clinton wished to join the peace efforts between Ireland and Britain. And what better way was there to exhibit his eagerness except by inviting the two leaders to Washington on a day dear to them?





New tales of King Vikram and the Vampire

The Giant and the Pendant

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time; gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O King! You seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite, as if you wish to achieve something. I pity you. Instead of enjoying comfortable sleep on a cozy bed, you're still coming after me. I admire your determination. Not that I have any doubt, but I hope you've no selfish motives to achieve. We often come across people professing care for the welfare of the people or the good of the community, but they seldom



raise their little finger to promote anything like that. You shouldn't go to their service or help; your effort will only go waste. You must know where your charity or kindness will touch. We've an example in Ghoraveera. This giant had a rare pendant with him. One day, he gave it to someone who really did not deserve it. You must listen to his story." The vampire then began his narration.

Ghoraveera had his abode in the thick forests of Ghataprabha mountain ranges, which separated Himagiri and Simhagiri. People from one kingdom moving to the

other necessarily had to pass through the forests. Ghoraveera was happy because whenever he felt hungry, he had only to wait for the first wayfarer to pounce on him and make a meal of him.

One day, a nymph came that way from the heavens. Maniprabha was eager to see the wonders of the earth. She was not only a paragon of beauty, but was kind-hearted, too, wishing to be of help to others. As she wandered from place to place, she happened to reach the Ghataprabha valley where the pendant she had on her glittering necklace got dislodged and fell down. She went back to her heavenly abode after wandering for a long time. She was not at all aware of her loss.

Fortunately for her, Ghoraveera did not see the nymph, but happened to step on the pendant. He picked it up. It shone as it lay in his palm. Its brilliance lit the forest all around. He knew that it was something rare. He wore it on the necklace of beads he had on him. The moment he wore the pendant, there was a sudden change in his behaviour and attitude. He was no more cruel; he was not given to anger any more. Instead, a feeling of kindness and compassion came

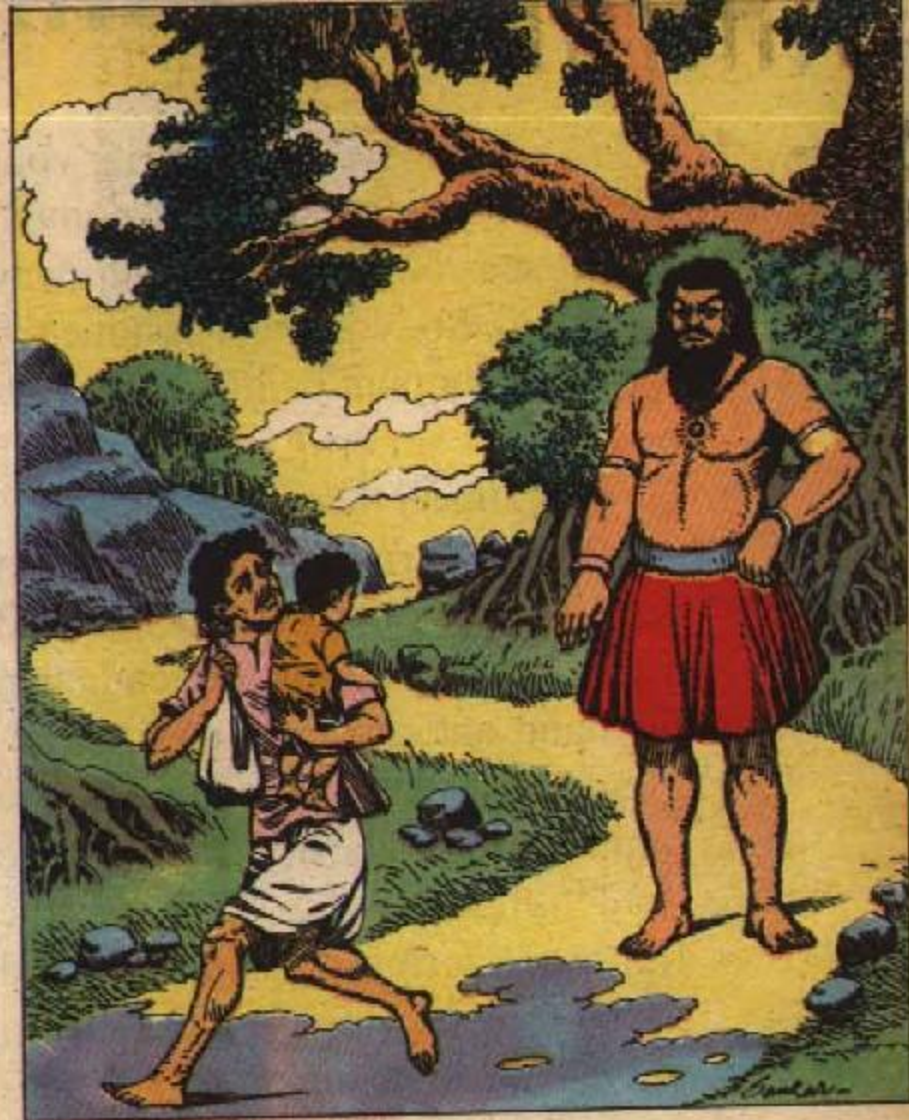


over him. He now had no urge to kill and eat human beings, even animals or birds.

A group of travellers came his way before long. One of them was an old man and his little son who was pestering his father to carry him on his shoulders. Ghoraveera heard the little one crying and took pity on him. He went up to them and said: "Poor boy! Why should you bother your father to carry you on his shoulders? Can't you see he is quite old and cannot carry someone fat like you? Come on. Both of you climb on to my shoulders, and I shall take you wherever you want to go."

Father and son took a good look at Ghoraveera and ran for their life, lest the giant caught hold of them and ate them up. Ghoraveera could not believe his own words. Instead of being cruel to them, he was touched by their helplessness and wished to go to their aid. What had brought such a change in him? he wondered. He went and sat beneath a tree, trying to find an answer to the doubt that lurked in his mind.

Soon, a *sanyasi* came that way. Gnanaprakash possessed strange powers and could guess that something must have happened to



Ghoraveera, though he looked a giant and should have commanded whatever he wished for. "You seem to be in a dilemma," the *sanyasi* told him. "And I know what it is."

Ghoraveera was startled. How could the *sanyasi* know what was in his mind? He stared at Gnanaprakash without responding.

"Some change has come over to you," explained Gnanaprakash, "and it is because of the pendant you're wearing. It belonged to the nymph Maniprabha, who is the personification of compassion. The pendant can grant whatever is asked of it. If you, too, want to do good to others,



may do so, but not in your present form as a giant. The moment people see you, they'll only run away from you. So, you must assume the form of a human being before you begin serving people." Gnanaprakash then went his way.

Ghoraveera wanted to test whether what the sanyasi had told him was true. He took the pendant in his hand and at the same time expressed his wish to change into a human being. The next moment, he shed his huge form and assumed the figure of a normal man. He remained in the forest, helping all those who passed through the forest. Whenever he found that people were be-

ing tormented by robbers and thieves, he drove them away. He even removed stones and thorns lying on the pathway in the forest and dug wells to provide drinking water to the wayfarers.

Ghoraveera was not aware that someone was watching all his movements and actions. A spy from the kingdom of Simhagiri was in the forest at the time Gnanaprakash was meeting Ghoraveera. He overheard the conversation between the sanyasi and the giant. King Simhanada had sent Aditya to go to Himagiri to assess the strength of the army there, so that he could prepare for a war with the neighbouring kingdom.



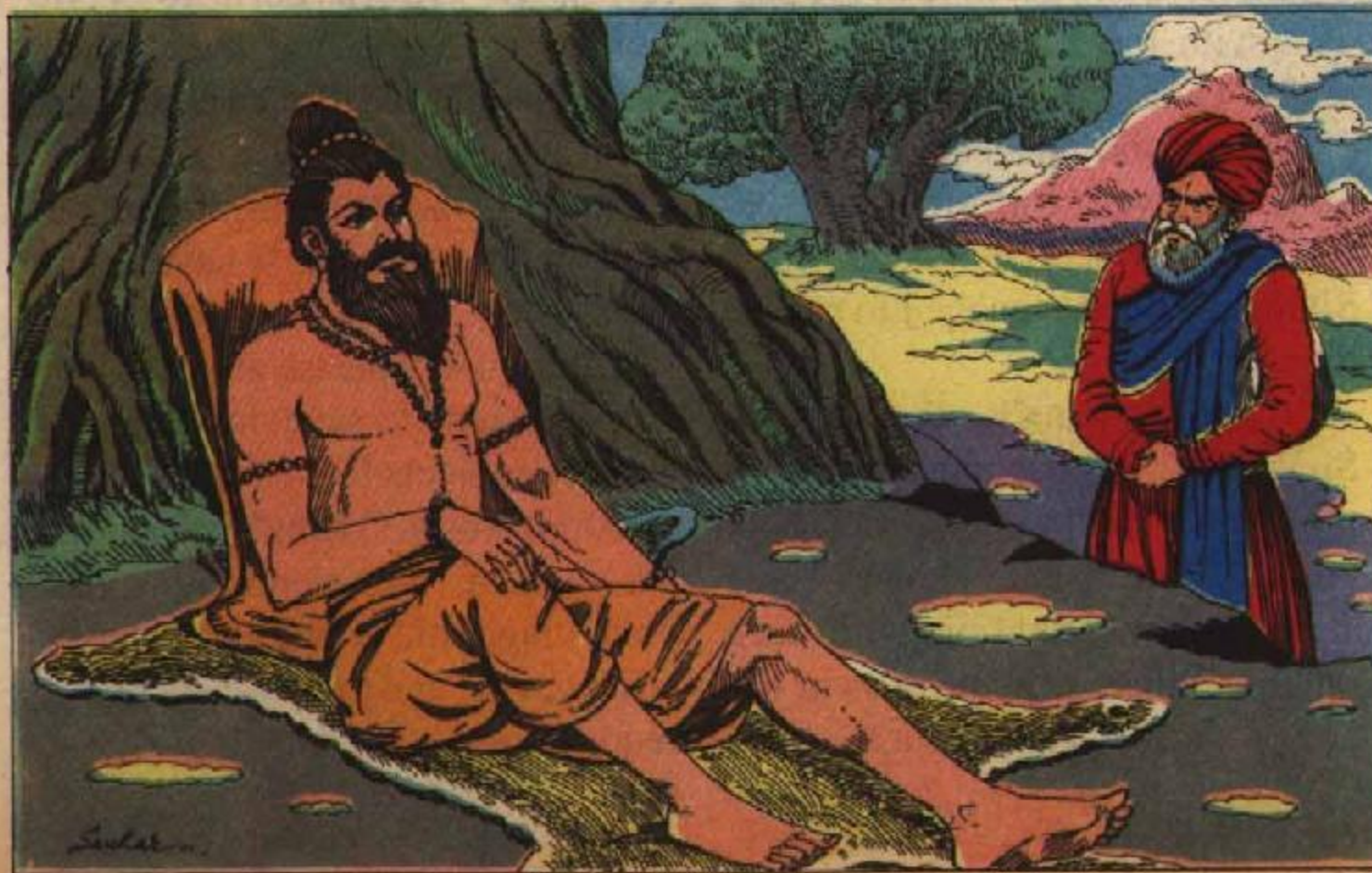
Accordingly, Aditya was on his way to Himagiri when he happened to come across the giant and the sanyasi.

King Hemanga of Himagiri was of philanthropic disposition. His main concern was the welfare of his subjects. As a result, the kingdom prospered and the people were happy and contented. The king came to know of the evil intentions of his neighbour and was worried, especially because he knew that his army was no match to that of Simhagiri. He, therefore, wished to avoid a conflict with king Simhanada.

Meanwhile, Aditya had hurried back to his king to inform him of all

that he saw and heard while in the forest. King Simhanada was now very keen that he should possess the pendant with strange powers. If he had it in his hands, he knew he would not only conquer Himagiri, but would be able to extend his suzerainty over other kingdoms as well. Such thoughts went over his head and he even considered himself as an emperor-in-the-making. But before all that happened, he would need the friendship and assistance of the giant. He now set out to meet Ghoraveera.

King Hemanga also had come to hear about a giant-turned-human being and the services he rendered





to people with the help of a magical pendant. He, too, wished to befriend Ghoraveera and get hold of the pendant with the strange powers. He really wanted to avoid a war with Simhagiri and unnecessary loss of innocent lives. Unfortunately, before he could meet Ghoraveera, King Simhanada had managed to call on him.

"I am Simhanada, the King of Simhagiri," he introduced himself to Ghoraveera. "I've heard a lot about you and your help to people. There are kingdoms fighting with each other and there is heavy loss of life and property. I want to put an end to

all that. And I can think of only one solution. The kingdoms should be brought under one umbrella of suzerainty. Only then will the people enjoy peace and happiness. To achieve this, I'll need the magical pendant you possess. With the help of the pendant, I shall bring peace to the land. Thereby you'll also be doing a great service to people."

"Your desire is praiseworthy," remarked Ghoraveera. "I would like to visit your kingdom and have an idea of your governance. Only then can I decide about handing over the pendant to you."

King Simhanada could not press his request, so he left for his kingdom, after extending a formal invitation to Ghoraveera to visit Simhagiri. Sometime later, King Hemanga arrived and explained to Ghoraveera how the King of Simhagiri was preparing for an attack on his kingdom. "I have heard about the pendant in your possession. If you will please give it to me, I shall be able to save my kingdom and my subjects from a war."

"Don't worry, O King!" responded Ghoraveera. "I'm planning to visit your kingdom, to see the state of affairs there, and then consider your request for the pendant."



First he went to Himagiri. He was convinced of King Hemanga's ability and how his rule had brought happiness and contentment to his subjects. Next he went to Simhagiri, where he was an eyewitness to King Simhanada's misrule. He was sorry to find the people there unhappy. There was no end to their woes. Ghoraveera decided to hand over the pendant to Simhanada.

The vampire concluded the story at that point and then turned to King Vikramaditya. "O King! Don't you think Ghoraveera was foolish in his decision? King Hemanga deserved the pendant better. After all he had ensured his people's happiness. Instead of helping him, why did Ghoraveera go to the help of Simhanada who had failed in his duty towards his people? If you don't answer my questions to my satisfaction, beware, your head will be blown to pieces."

The king thought for a little while. "Hemanga was a good ruler. His administration was perfect. He had only one worry – the threat of an attack by Simhagiri. King Simhanada was cruel. He terrorised his people who suffered at his hands. Therefore, if he could be reformed, he would turn a good ruler; his rule would be ideal, aimed at the people's welfare. When there was peace and prosperity within the country, the king's mind would also turn away from wars and annexation. This alone had prompted Ghoraveera to decide that though Hemanga was an ideal ruler and deserved the pendant, it would benefit King Simhanada more by bringing about a change in his attitude and behaviour."

The vampire realised that the king was too smart for him. He flew back to the ancient tree, carrying the corpse with him. Vikramaditya drew his sword, and went after the vampire.



SPORTS YESTERDAY TODAY TOMORROW

BRADMAN'S RECORD

South Australia was playing Tasmania, an island off Australia. The great

Don (Donald Bradman) took 369 runs in 253 minutes. The score included 4 sixes and 46 fours - which was a record. The



Bradman

date was March 2, 1936. Earlier, his highest was 334 runs against England, in 1930. He was then just 22 years old. He became Australia's captain in 1936. In 52 Test matches, he averaged 99.94 runs per innings. If he had scored four more runs in his final innings, his average would have risen to 100. He was dismissed for the second ball.

MORE BIDDERS

The last World Cup Football was held in the U.S.A. in 1994. The next championships will be held in France in 1998. Where will the championships be held in the year 2002? FIFA wanted the championships to be held in Asia, and South Korea's application was under consideration. February 28 was the last

day. One day before that, Japan made its bid. Prime Minister Murayama declared that the event would receive government backing. The two countries were rivals once before, while they bid for the 1988 Olympic Games, which ultimately went to South Korea. Will the tables be turned this time? The FIFA decision will come only in the next two months.

BEATS OWN RECORD

That was Michael Johnson, of the U.S.A. The event: 400 metres; the occasion: the U.S.A. Indoor Track and Field Championship at Atlanta; and the date: March 14 this year. He clocked 44.63 seconds, improving upon his own world record of 44.97 seconds made at Nevada on February 10. He was then re-writing the 2-year-old record of 45.02 seconds in the name of Dammy Evert, also of the U.S.A. The

o u t d o o r record for the same event is 43.29 seconds held by Bert Reynolds, U.S.A. In Atlanta, Derek Wills who was 10



Michael Johnson

metres behind Johnson at the finishing point could not believe his eyes. He later remarked: "I should have been in the stands watching Johnson, instead of competing with him."

With an Indian name from Persia

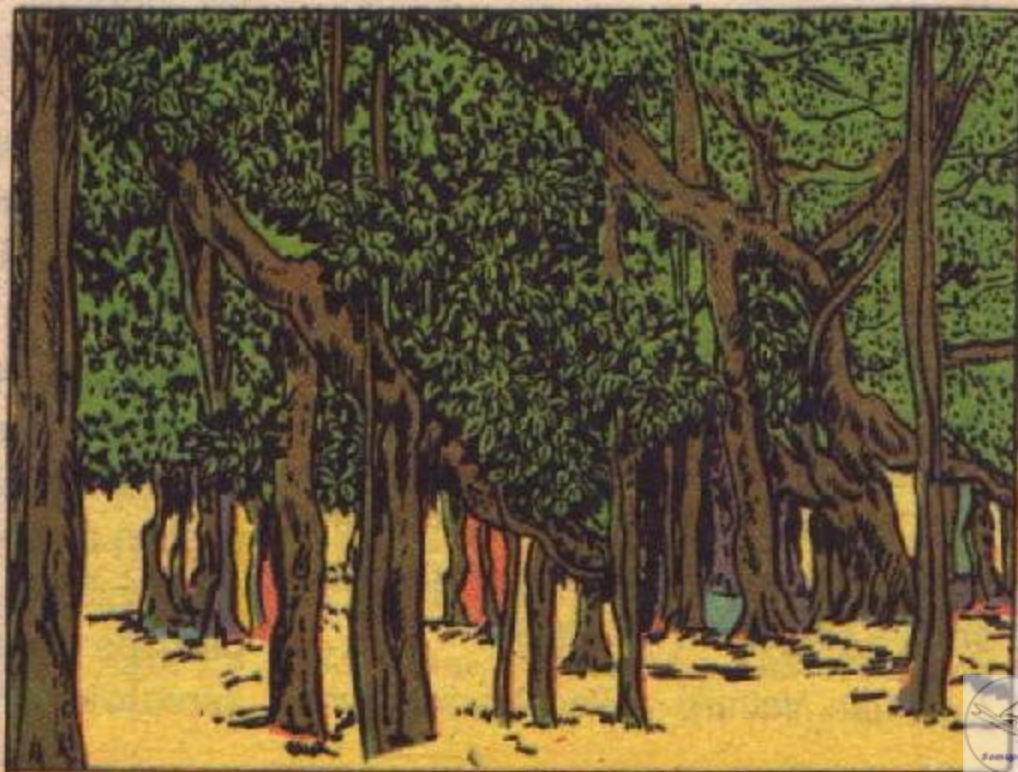
There will not be any village in India which does not have a banyan tree. It is not only held in great reverence, but attracts people to the shade beneath its spreading branches. They are really aerial roots which reach the ground below and become auxiliary trunks. The branches spread in such a way that the vast area below can easily accommodate thousands of people. There was such a huge tree near the Persian Gulf which used to be frequented by traders or *banyas* from India who would halt there for days together. It was the Persians who named the tree after them. In Hindi, the tree is called *bor* or *ber* and in Marathi *war*. The name in other languages are *ala* in Tamil, *peral* in Malayalam, and *mari* in Telugu. In English it is called the Indian fig tree.

In olden days, women not blessed with children worshipped the tree on the new moon day in the month of *Jaishtha* (May-June). According to mythology, Savitri worshipped a banyan tree on this day to save the life of her husband, Satyavan. The day thus came to be called 'Vat-Savitri'. Hindus believe that when creation comes to an end, there is a deluge, and from the water springs up a fig leaf with the picture of Lord Vishnu as baby Krishna sucking his toe. Portraits of little Krishna painted on dried banyan leaves are 'best-sellers' among gift articles.

Some of the well known banyan trees are the one in the Botanical Gardens in Sibpur, near Calcutta, the tree in the Theosophical Society campus in Adyar, Madras, the one in Gopepur in Bihar looking like a massive umbrella, and another one in Kamtoul, also in Bihar, which has spread over three acres.

The leaves are broad, oval in shape, and leathery, with short and stout stalks. New leaves appear during February and March. The tree may appear to bear no flowers, as they are found inside the figs. The figs, or fruits, grow in pairs. They are a bright red when fully ripe. The figs then attract a variety of birds to the tree, and the time is April to June.

The banyan tree is believed to live for centuries.



NARADA



A great Rishi who loved both God and his creation was Narada. He was the son of Brahma and an ardent devotee of Vishnu. His great joy lay in chanting the name of Narayana (Vishnu) while playing his Veena.

Narada, indeed, has been a great benefactor of man. He learnt from Vishnu and, in his turn, imparted what he learnt to the deserving among mankind. He never got tired of roaming the earth, either as a messenger of Vishnu or as a singer of His name.

When Valmiki asked Narada who

the greatest man was, Narada spoke of Rama. That inspired Valmiki to settle down on the banks of river Tamasa and devote himself to the composition of the great epic, *Ramayana*. Later, when the Pandavas decided to build a city, Narada described to them the celestial cities of Lord Indra and Lord Kuvera. Accordingly was built the capital of the Pandavas, Indraprastha.

In our ignorance we often think that Narada inspires quarrels and strifes. He appears to do that, but his motive is to secure the triumph of the good over the bad. For example, when Kamsa was anxious to find where the child Krishna was, for it had been prophesied that the demon-king would meet his death at Krishna's hands, it was Narada who informed him where Krishna was. That agitated Kamsa. He tried to kill the little Krishna as quick as possible and thereby hastened his own death. The earth was rid of his tyranny.

Narada was also the cause of Ravana's death, in a certain sense. Once when Ravana wanted the sage to explain to him the meaning of the sacred syllable *Aum*, Narada refused, perhaps because Ravana did not deserve to know it. That infuriated Ravana.

He thought of cutting Narada's tongue. It was then that Narada cursed him, saying that one day all his ten heads shall be cut off.

Narada is always eager to learn. Once he asked Vishnu what *Maya* is, because he understood that creation rests on *Maya*. Vishnu assured him that he would know all about it in due course. One day, while passing through a village, Narada suddenly came under a heavy downpour. For shelter he knocked on a door. It was opened by a beautiful girl. Narada married her at the request of her parents. He stayed on there. Years passed. He was now the father of several children – facing all the usual problems and hardships of life. One night, a terrible flood submerged his

house, and his wife and children were gone! He cried out, "O Narayana!" The next moment he found himself standing before Vishnu – his past vanished like a dream. He then understood what *Maya* is.

It was Narada who warned King Aswapathy that his daughter, Savitri, had chosen to marry a prince, Satyavan, who was destined to die after a year. This revelation helped Savitri to prepare herself to face the god of Death and to win her husband's soul back.

Narada is happily involved in numerous episodes in India's tradition. He is a great name in our heritage and a most interesting character.



DO YOU KNOW?

1. Which country produces the largest quantity of oil?
2. Which dramatist is popularly called India's Shakespeare?
3. Greenland is not a country by itself, but part of a country. Which?
4. A river rises in Tibet, flows through the Himalayas, and joins the Ganga before it reaches the sea. Which river?
5. Which is the largest member of the grass family?
6. An Indian city is known as City of Seven Islands. Name the city?
7. Who invented the radio?
8. Who is the author of *Ram Charit Manas*?
9. Who is considered as the 'father' of economics?
10. Which Rajput princess did Akbar marry?
11. Quinine, widely used for curing Malaria, is extracted from the bark of a tree. Which?
12. A city in South India was once the administrative headquarters of the British army. Which?
13. The Indonesian island of Sumatra has a more popular local name. What?
14. Who was the oldest player ever to play in a Cricket Test match?
15. Who discovered the route to India via the Cape of Good Hope, in 1498?
16. In the *Ramayana*, what is the name of Lakshmana's wife?
17. On which river is the city of Berlin situated?
18. The first explorer was an Egyptian. Name him.

ANSWERS

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 18. Henna | 9. Adam Smith |
| 17. River Sprey | 8. Tulsidas |
| 16. Urmila | 7. G. Marconi |
| 15. Vasco da Gama | 6. Bombay |
| 14. W. Rhodes of England was 52 years when he played his last Test match. | 5. Bamboo |
| 13. Java Minor | 4. The Brahmaputra |
| 12. Bangalore | 3. Denmark |
| 11. Cinchona | 2. Kalidas |
| 10. Jodha Bai | 1. Russia |



KING RAGHAVENDRA



(The curse by a Brahmin boy that Raghavendra will die within two months brings about a feeling of remorse in the King of Kanaka. At the instance of King Chitrāsena, of the neighbouring kingdom of Chanda, Yogananda calls on Raghavendra and instils in him some courage to meet his fate. On the advice of the sage, the king begins to take interest in the affairs of the state and welfare of his subjects whose one complaint remains unremedied.)

King Raghavendra had hoped that the sage Yogananda would stay back in the kingdom for some days, but he told the king that he was on a pilgrimage and would not stay at a place for more than a day. The king prostrated before him and said: "O revered one! Please bless me to rule this kingdom efficiently as per your advice."

From his shaken voice, Yogananda realised that the king's emotion was giving way. He felt sorry for the impudent king who was now re-

penting his folly. "So be it!" he said, placing both hands on the king's head. When he got up, the sage found tears in his eyes. He affectionately patted him on his shoulders and bade him farewell.

From then on, King Raghavendra underwent a metamorphosis. He took greater interest in the problems faced by his subjects and tried to remedy them. Every evening he would visit a few houses, listening to the people's woes. A major problem faced by them was their harass-



ment by the 'Zamindars' who grabbed the lands of peasants whenever they delayed repayment of loans taken by them. The king warned the Zamindars that he would expropriate their property and himself look after the welfare of the poor people. He asked them to give the peasants more time to make repayments. The Zamindars promised him that they would be sympathetic towards the farmers.

Raghavendra enacted many measures for the welfare of his subjects. Observing that many in his kingdom had no belief in education, he himself sent many children to the

ashrams of renowned sages to receive the best of education.

He also found out that many people were interested in singing and playing musical instruments. Queen Savitri, who had started learning music under a well-known 'guru', welcomed these people to join her at the king's behest.

Suddenly, the kingdom of Kanaka blossomed under the rule of Raghavendra. People were happy and their attitude towards the once cruel king changed dramatically.

Now, one complaint of the people alone remained to be tackled. They were still agitated by the frequent thefts in the kingdom. Every day, there would be one report of robbery or another. The king offered his help in tracing the criminals and give them stringent punishment. He posted guards to keep a strict vigil all through the night. Days passed by. Though no thief was caught, the number of thefts came down.

One day, the king was in his 'darbar', when an old man stepped forward and bowed. He appeared weak and fragile. He held another man by the hand. "O King! This man is a thief," he wailed. "He tried to commit theft in my house the other night, but I stopped him just in time.



However, he overpowered me and made good his escape. Today, I spotted him in the market and caught hold of him. I have brought him here so that you can suitably punish him."

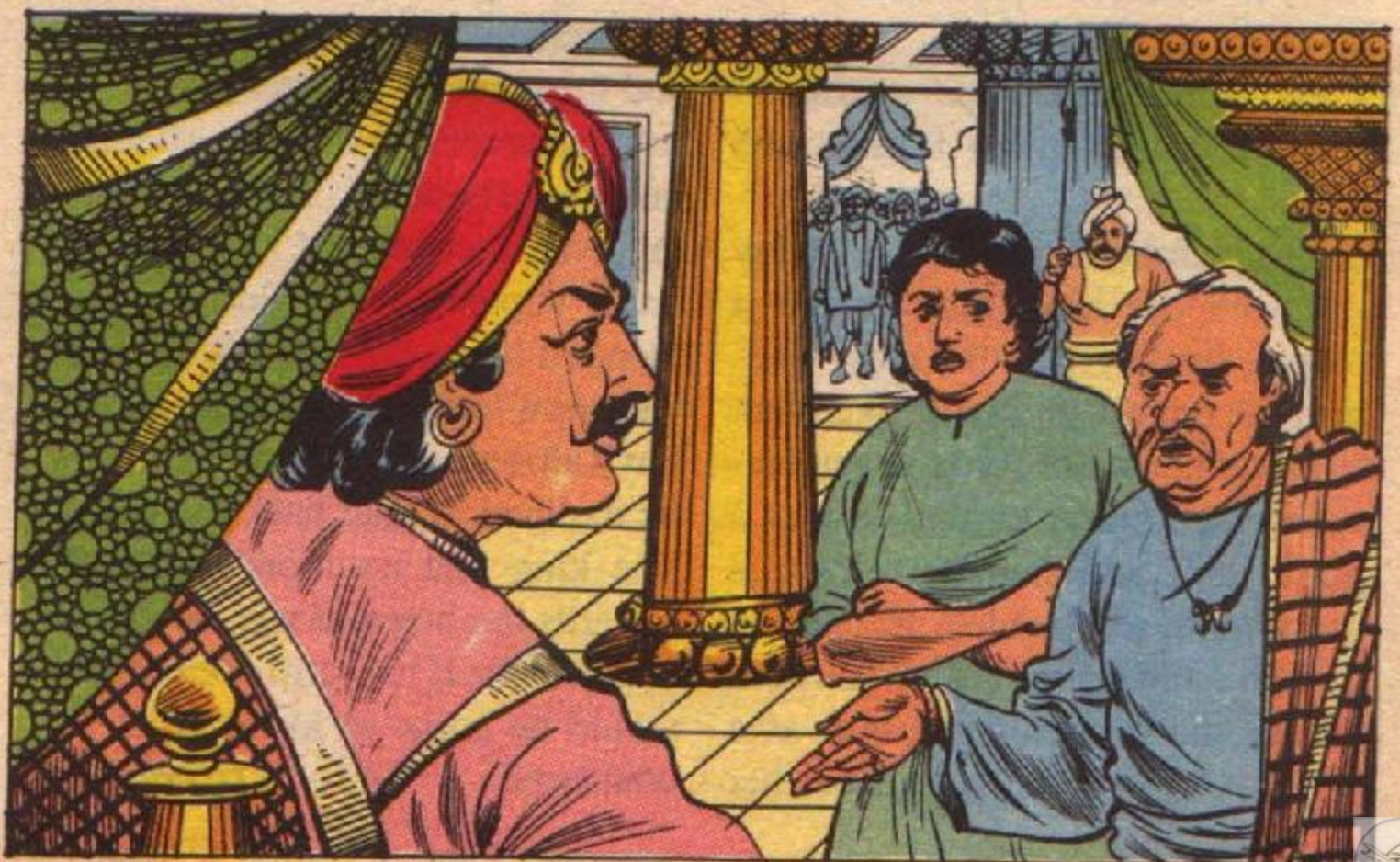
The man denied the charge. "Your Majesty! All that he says is a lie. I don't know what grudge he has against me to make him call me a 'thief'."

The king asked the old man, "Can you describe what exactly had happened?"

"Your Majesty," the man spoke up, "I was sleeping when I heard something falling to the floor in the next room. At once, I got up and silently went and peeped inside. I

saw this man stealing ornaments from a trunk and putting them into a bag. I pounced on him. I was able to see his face in the moonlight that fell inside the room. He managed to escape through the open window. However, he left behind the bag and the ornaments he was trying to take away. Therefore, I did not call the guards who were keeping vigil at the other end of the street. Today I spotted him in the market, and I brought him to your court, sire."

The other man dismissed all the accusations as false. On questioning by the king, he said his name was Viju and was jobless. The old man, Ramlal, was a money-lender.





The king said: "You both may leave now. But be present here the day after tomorrow."

He then ordered his guards to make enquiries about Ramlal and Viju.

The guards returned the next day and told the king that though a money-lender, Ramlal was kind-hearted, honest, and a virtuous man. Viju was known only to a vegetable-seller. According to her, he was a petty thief and had herself once caught him red-handed. He was an orphan and taking pity on his condition, she had engaged him as a helper. After he tried to steal her

money, she had dispensed with his services.

When Ramlal and Viju appeared in the court on the third day, Raghavendra told them that he was not punishing the young man straight away but would give him employment so that he would turn away from his bad ways. Those in the 'durbar' hailed the king for his soft-hearted approach to a criminal so as to give him a chance to reform himself. They were surprised when Raghavendra announced that Viju would help the government in catching thieves who were harassing the people. "It is only a thief who can catch another thief," he remarked.

King Raghavendra every now and then remembered the Brahmin boy and the curse he had given him. He was reconciled to the idea of death, but should he die of illness and without even a chance of a cure as the curse stipulated? He himself had mended his ways and his subjects were now happy. What would be the boy's attitude to him now? Would he be inclined to take back the curse? The king had no more animosity towards the boy and was now keen to meet him. If he were to send word, would he come to his 'durbar'? he wondered.

- To continue



Gopal's Guesses

Gopal suffered a loss of memory. He was admitted to hospital. After some days, the doctor told him, "Gopal, you're now all right, and you may go home." He was happy that he did not have to stay in the hospital for long.

As he neared his village, he saw someone sitting beneath a huge banyan tree. His face looked familiar, but Gopal could not remember his name. He went up to him. "I've met you before, perhaps at the wedding in Parasuram's house?"

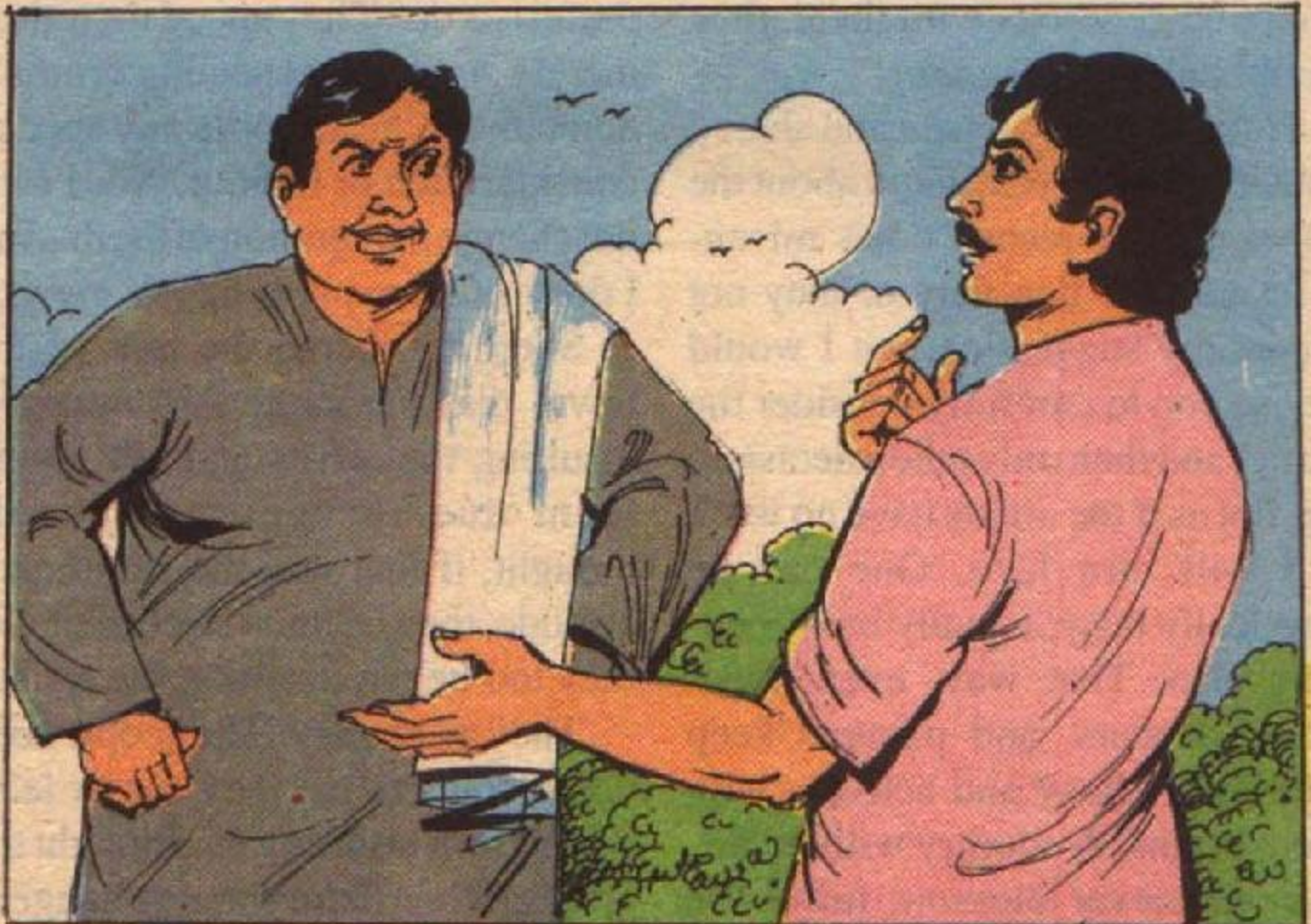
"I'm afraid not," said the stranger.

"Then it could be at the 60th birthday celebrations of Pasupati?" Gopal suggested.

"No." Again a reply in the negative.

"I know, it was at the weekly shandy in the neighbouring village," Gopal said quite confidently.

"You haven't been cured of your illness, Gopal!" the man responded. "I'm your uncle, Krishnayya." He then took Gopal back to the Hospital.





Wanted : Artists

Lakshmansingh was the zamindar of Lalbagh, who patronised musicians, dancers, painters, and other artists. But he thought they really did not deserve the remuneration and rewards he gave them. They did not do any other work. If he continued to be generous with them, they would only become lazy.

He sent for his *dewan* and shared with him his apprehension about the artists. "Sire, please don't misunderstand me. You may or may not accept my suggestion, but I would advise you to carefully consider the matter and then only take a decision. It is not as if the artists have no work and will turn lazy. One can be physically busy; equally busy mentally also. That way, even musicians, dancers, and painters keep themselves busy and active – with their brains. A country without artists will never blossom fully. We

should not deride them."

"I don't agree with what you say," said the zamindar to the dewan. "What do we gain by maintaining these artists? The soldiers guard the country and the farmers give us our food. Compared to them, what do the artists do? They spend their time merely singing and beating drums. I don't think they deserve any special consideration or honour. No, I cannot change my opinion of them. And I don't mind expressing my views."

Soon it became the talk of the town, that the zamindar was now insulting the artists and not giving them due recognition. People thought, if that was the zamindar's attitude, then he must be correct. So, they too began insulting the artists.

They were sorry. 'The people need not encourage us; they can at least desist from insulting us,' thought the artists. When there was no change in

the people's attitude, the musicians, dancers, and painters decided to leave the place and go somewhere else where they would not suffer any insult. In no time Lalbagh was devoid of any musician, dancer or painter.

Meanwhile, the zamindar's wife fell ill. Several doctors were called in but none of them could diagnose what her illness was. No treatment had any effect on her. She went lean and weak. She became bedridden and had no urge to live.

At last, the family doctor went to the zamindar and said: "Sire, we've tried all sorts of medicines, but there is no improvement in your wife. We feel, it is not any physical illness. She has been affected mentally. She has no enthusiasm to live a normal life. You must do something to make her mentally happy. Only then will she be able to get up from her bed and become normal."

Lakshmansingh was worried when he heard all that from the family physician. The dewan was present at that time. "Sire, all those people who are physically tired will come out of their fatigue by merely listening to music, or watching a dance, or a drama. That's what our ancestors have said and written



down. Some people can be cured of their illnesses with the help of music. I would, therefore, advise you to arrange for music and dance recitals for the sake of your wife. That would buck her up and she might become normal. When she is seriously ill, you should not be adamant. You must forget your personal views and try to comfort your wife."

All the while, the zamindar remained silent, except for a nod here, or another nod there. The dewan himself took the initiative to invite some musicians and dancers. The zamindar's wife was taken to the hall to watch the dances, while the



musicians were asked to perform in her bedchamber itself. Soon, there was improvement in her condition, and she was even able to walk up to the hall, and also enjoy the taste of food given to her. The zamindar joined her whenever he could find time and felt relieved to see that his wife was slowly returning to normal.

Word spread that the zamindar of Lalbagh was once again entertaining artists. One day, two musicians sought audience with him. He did not desire to employ them as his wife had been cured of her illness, and there was no further need to hold performances for her sake. So, he was not very happy to meet the visiting musicians. But they were praising him skyhigh.

Anyway, he wanted to test them, and asked them to sing a song. The song contained some words and sounds that he had never heard of. He was annoyed with them. He

showed signs to them to stop singing. "What's all this nonsense that you're singing?" he asked them angrily.

"Sire, it's no nonsense," they both pleaded humbly, and began analysing the words and their meanings.

The zamindar was highly impressed. "I never imagined that the words in songs have such deep meaning," he remarked. He rewarded them suitably and after sending them away, he turned to the dewan. "I was wrong in insulting the artists. They are able to bring peace and solace to minds which suffer fatigue. They deserve to be encouraged and patronised."

The dewan reminded the zamindar of what he had told him once before when he was trying to send the artists away from Lalbagh. After that, the zamindar went about announcing: "Artists are welcome!"





LET US KNOW

Why is the rainbow shaped like a semi-circle?

- D. Bhageerathi, Jalpaiguri

A rainbow occurs when there is dispersion of light by little drops of water in the atmosphere, which act as prisms. A rainbow is seen near the horizon, and as the atmosphere near the horizon is semi-circular, the shape of the rainbow, too, appears semi-circular.

Is it easier to push than to pull?

- M. Karthikeyan, Ongole

No, it is invariably easier to pull than to push, because when you push something, you push at a certain angle below the horizontal. So, a part of the force you use acts downward, and adds to the weight of the mass. When you pull, you apply force at a certain angle above the horizontal. A part of the force acts upward, thus reducing the effective weight of the mass.

MORE STORIES

I am mad after *Chandamama*. I liked the new series on the Sages of India. I don't mind the increase in price. But please ensure that there are 8 to 10 stories in every issue.

- Akshay A. Jhaveri, Solapur

I like "*Tales from many lands*," which give mental refreshment. I also like "*Let Us Know*" which improves our general knowledge.

**- V.V. Subrahmanyam,
Gollalamamidada**

I hope you will start a series on the Temples of South India. Please mention the nearest railway station and distance from the station.

- Srikantan, Hyderabad

There is only one picture-story (*Panchatantra*) now. Kindly let us have one or two more.

- S. Anees Ahmed, Bangalore

I like mostly *Panchatantra*, *Forts of India*, and the *Photo Caption Contest*. I am requesting you to add more stories, and more quiz of different types.

- Anand Purkayastha, Imphal



PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Taji Prasad



Taji Prasad

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? You may write it on a post card and mail it to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by the 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs. 100/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The Prize for March '95 goes to :-

M.K. Venugopalan

"OM SWEET OM"

296, Kamraj Salai, Ramakrishna Nagar

Madras - 600 087..

The winning entry : "CONCENTRATION", "CONSULTATION"

PICKS FROM THE WISE

To escape criticism – do nothing, say nothing, be nothing.

– Elbert Hubbard

Only a person who can live with himself can enjoy the gift of leisure.

– Henry Greber

Please all and you please none.

– Anon

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SPOT THE 10 DIFFERENCES



- Answers
1. The number of petals in the flowers are more.
 2. The parrot's beak is open.
 3. The parrot has a red stripe around its neck.
 4. The girl's eyes are open.
 5. The girl is smiling.
 6. There are stars painted on her frock.
 7. The girl's bangle is studded with gems.
 8. The dog's tongue is hanging out.
 9. The plate has Parle name on it.
 10. There are Mango Bites kept in the plate.

